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VOL. CCXXVIII.

MEN OF CHARACTER BY DOUGLAS JERROLD.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

MEN OF CHARACTER.

BY

DOUGLAS JERROLD.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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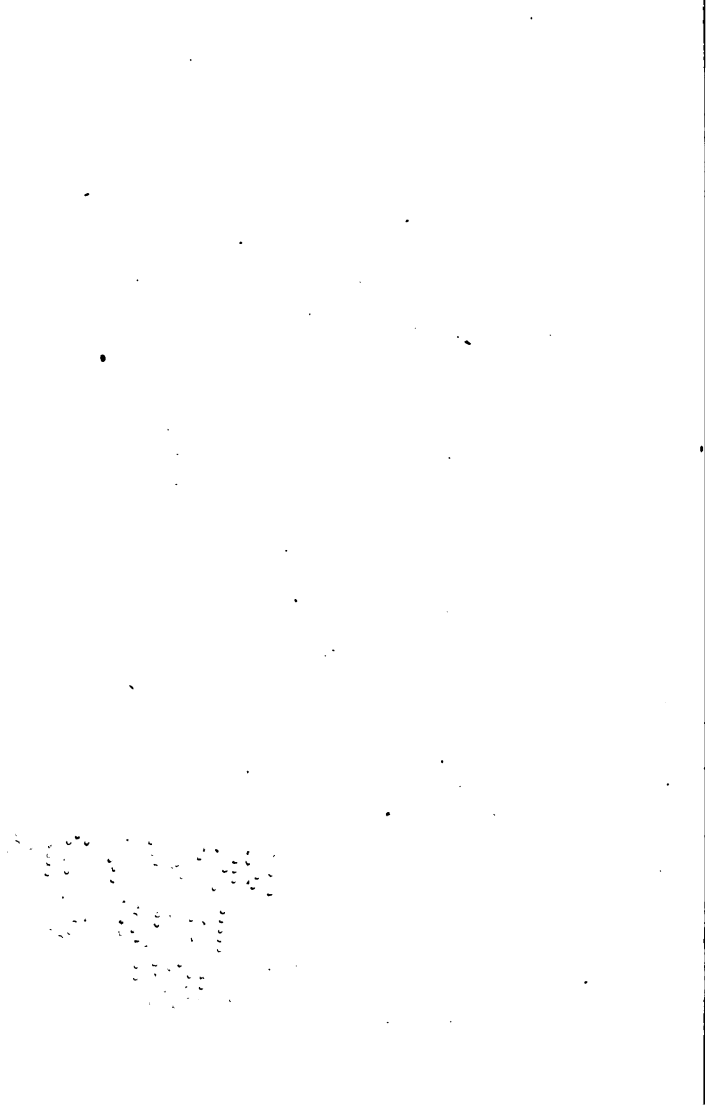

PREFACE.

The greater number of these Characters — or, rather, Sketches of Character — originally appeared some sixteen years ago. The incidents of each paper make no pretension to the construction of a complete story: they are rather presented as an endeavour — often, too, a hardy, extravagant one — to illustrate certain moral and personal peculiarities of the heroes (heroes of fewest inches!) with little regard to the elaborate working out of the likeness. Indeed, Men of Character are little other than Men of Outlines; pen-and-ink flourishes; with, possibly, now and then some better trace of human similitude, and now, running into mere grotesque.

Thus, Job Pippins is nothing more than the hero of accident. The plaything, and, finally, the prosperous man of worldly chance. Are there such men? Different readers may haply make different answers. With the writer, however, Job is somewhat of a favourite; from the circumstance that whatever good spirits may be found in him, the sunshine was not reflected from the actual hour of his pen-and-ink parent.

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JOB PIPPINS;

THE MAN WHO "COULDN'T HELP IT."

MEN OF CHARACTER.

VOL. I.

JOB PIPPINS;

THE MAN WHO "COULDN'T HELP IT."

CHAPTER I.

PUT away temptation from the heart, eyes, ears, and fingers of Job Pippins, and behold in him a model of self-government. Born an Esquimaux, we can answer for him, he had never yearned for grape-juice — blind, carnal beauty had never betrayed him — stone-deaf, he had given no ear to bland seductions — rich as a nabob, we are convinced he had never wished to pick a pocket. Superficial thinkers may call this negative goodness. Very well. Will they, at the same time, tell us how many men of character in this world of contradiction are made up of mere negatives?

Here, Jenny, take away this foul black ink, vile compound of gall and acid, and bring us a honey-comb. And, Jenny, dear, relieve us of this last small handiwork of old Mulciber (that he who wrought mail for Achilles should now nib pens for stockbrokers!)

and give us a feather, dropt from the wing of your pet ringdove. So; we are in a charitable mood; our heart opens — our sympathies begin to flow. We will indite the apologetic history of Job Pippins. Yes; it shall be to us a labour of love to turn ebony into ivory.

At one-and-twenty Job Pippins being his own master, had little restraint to complain of. In truth, no mortal could be more indulgent to himself; no man more readily forgive, more speedily forget, the faults and follies of his own flesh. Sorry are we to say, the benevolent example was entirely lost upon the world about him: for the first important incident of Job's life will show how, in the very fulness of his hopes, he was driven from his native town — slander, like a mortal snake, hissing at his exiled heels. At once to begin our domestic tragedy of humble life.

Sir Scipio Mannikin was the pearl of men. The purity of three maiden aunts was incarnated in a masculine tabernacle. Yes; in Sir Scipio a leash of spinsters lived again. Should sceptics doubt, let them read the printed wisdom of Mannikin at Quarter Sessions, and acknowledge the metempsychosis. Briefly; the most remarkable difference between the knight and any of the three immaculate maidens may be defined in one short word — shaving. Happy had it been for Job, had Sir Scipio shared in the same contempt of the operation with his lamented female relations!

Profoundly certain are we of the happiness — the [illegible], the complete joy — of the young Lady Scipio

Mannikin. How could it be otherwise? Thirty years younger than her husband, she could gather, in the spring of life, the golden fruits of autumn. Was she too vivacious? — Her wild sallies were checked and guided by the monitor of experience. Was her heart ever and anon about to run from her mouth? — A look from Sir Scipio would freeze it at her lip. Did she talk idly of the beauties of this world? — Her moralising spouse would convince her that, saving his own estate and his own person, the whole earth was but one large dunghill, and the men and women miserable worms wriggling within it. Thus mated, we hear the silver voices of our female readers cry, "Happy, happy Lady Mannikin!"

We are convinced that it was only a combination of the rarest accidents that filled the house of Sir Scipio with the choicest of all things: his very door hinges turned upon the fat of the land. He had the best cook — the rarest wines — the handsomest horses — the most superb wife. It is a pleasure to know this: it is a consolation to all who would look into the hearts of men, to find the temperate and the unworldly thus appointed: to see them thus providentially rewarded.

You will hear a good, lowly creature sing the praises of pure water — call it the wine of Adam when he walked in Paradise — when, somehow, fate has bestowed upon the eulogist the finest burgundy. He declares himself contented with a crust — although a beneficent fairy has hung a fat haunch or two in his

larder. And then, for woman, he asks — what is all beauty but skin-deep? Behold the lawful bed-fellow of the querist: why, destiny has tied to him an angel — a perfect angel, save that for a time she has laid aside her wings. Now is it not delightful to see these humble folk, who tune their tongues to the honour of dry bread and water, compelled, by the gentle force of fortune, to chew venison and swallow claret?

"A steady, respectable young man?" asked Sir Scipio of his butler, with a searching look.

"They say, Sir Scipio, the lightest hand in the county."

"A lad of morality?" —

"He skims a beard off like froth."

"A dutiful son, and a peaceful neighbour?" —

"Lady Bag says he dresses hair like any mermaid."

"He may come."

And Job Pippins was straightway summoned to shave Sir Scipio Mannikin! Job crossed the threshold, and the Lares of Mannikin Hall gave a feeble wail. However, weeks passed on, and Job reaped new laurels with Sir Scipio's beard. Job's hand swept softly as the sweet south along the stubbled chin, and played like any butterfly about a peruke. That consummate genius should ever lack self-restraint!

About this time a domestic accident occurred to Lady Scipio — she suddenly lost her maid. The girl had been found guilty of receiving a valentine, "a filthy thing," in the words of the knight, "with two

hearts on one arrow, a couple of disgusting pigeons at the top, and loathsome love-verses at the bottom. A person who could receive such things, was not fit to be about Lady Scipio." Kitty White — to the sorrow of her mistress — was thrust from Mannikin Hall. And what is most extraordinary, the poor girl — albeit her suspicions fell upon two or three — could not, to her dying hour, precisely determine who had ruined her.

Indignant virtue is ever heedless of worldly consequences; otherwise Sir Scipio had retained the delinquent for at least another day; for Kitty was wont to raise to herself a crown of glory in the hair of her mistress, which she displayed with a taste only inferior to that of the superb Pippins himself. Now it so happened, that the day following the departure of the wanton maid, was the day appointed by Sir Scipio for a solemn festival to the stomachs of the heads of the neighbouring clergy. For a week past, two turtles in the kitchen of the knight, had lain upon their backs, resignedly awaiting the destroyer. Out of pure respect to his guests, Sir Scipio wished his lady to appear in all her brightness. It was provoking that the guilt of Kitty had not remained unknown until after the feast! There was no remedy; for once, at most, the tresses of Lady Scipio must fall into a masculine hand. Yes; Job Pippins — (again the Lares squeaked, and shuddered,) — must dress the hair of Lady Mannikin!

Now, in those days, ladies wore powder.

CHAPTER II.

We now approach the fall of Job. We have deferred as long as possible his ignominy — accident, we should say — but it is in vain to procrastinate; and so we at once produce this Tarquin with a razor. Compose yourselves, dear ladies, but — but enter Job Pippins!

"Upon my faith, a very handsome young man — a most genteel youth! There is a delicious wickedness in his face — ha! — the rogue has an eye like a hawk. A very proper young fellow!"

But, Madam, you forget — we call him a — a — Tarquin!

"No doubt, Sir — no doubt. A very charming young man."

"A perfect figure — neither too tall, nor too short," says the Dowager Lady Maudlincourt, looking at Job with the eye of a drill sergeant; "erect as a staff, and elastic as a cane." And the judgment of the dowager has passed into a proverb: no woman was ever so celebrated for the legs of her footmen.

Behold Job in the library of Sir Scipio, who had somewhat fantastically determined that his lady should receive our hero in that ark of learning, the husband himself sitting leering by. The tresses of Venus were unbound, and — oh, character! and oh, daily bread! But let us not anticipate. Job, with steady hand and innocent thoughts, proceeded in his task. He saw that

Lady Scipio was awfully beautiful; and a feeling of reverence thrilled to the tips of his fingers as they moved about her lovely head. He touched her hair as though it had been her heart-strings; and here and there disposed a curl at her neck, as if he laid a jewel worth a million there. Sir Scipio held in his hands Boetius, and in his eye Pippins.

And still Job lingered at his task, and still he felt his terrible trial. He seemed petrified by what the historians of weddings call — the novelty of his situation. To have beheld Lady Scipio and the barber, you would have thought that Diana had at a word called from a block of marble the bloodless image of man to dress her golden hair — a statue, made and animated for the nonce.

"Mr. Springe," said a servant, half opening the door.

"I'll — yes — I'll come to him," answered Sir Scipio, and he quitted the library. As the husband departed, the sun, which until that moment had thrown a blaze of light upon the Mannikin arms emblazoned in the windows, withdrew its glorious beam.

Already did Job approach the termination of his trials; already was he within a moment of deliverance, when the enemy of man made him his own. The locks of Lady Scipio were duly curled — and bound — and placed: already was her head a thing for Phidias, when the last ineffable grace was to be showered upon it — when the "new fallen snow" of the powder-puff

was to descend, like odours shaken from the wings of a thousand little loves. Lady Scipio held her mask to her face, and Job Pippins took the powder-puff in his hand!

Job walked twice or thrice around her ladyship and trembled. He tried to puff, but his unsteady hand, in fitful gusts, sent forth the powder above, below, about, but not upon the head. Again, Job addressed himself sternly to his purpose; he gave a "hem!" calling up resolution to his heart, and nerves to his fingers. Again, like a lion in a den, he made a circuit, breathing hard for virtuous self-possession. Never — never was barber so tempted! Be the reader judge.

We said Lady Scipio held a mask to her face; we told not the truth. It is most certain that she covered her forehead, eyes, and nose, with a little black vizard, but then — her lips! — her lips were ripe, red, and naked to the eye as the lips of Eve. And these, pouting apart, and breathing Araby to the senses of Job, said, in their delicious ruddiness, a thousand, thousand things the tongue could never utter. And then the eyes, the watchers of the treasure, were closed: the fruit seemed every instant to grow towards the hand, and the awful dragons were asleep! Nevertheless, Job tried to puff.

Man of flesh can do no more. Ay, well done, Job! puff, and turn your eye from the peril. That's right — look above at the bust of Seneca; banish the weakness crying in your heart, by the force of lofty

thoughts. Very good; cast another glance towards that thin folio in vellum. That, Job, is "Thomas à Kempis," a capital tome for men in your condition. Good again; let your eyes shun the balmy evil, and feed upon "The Whole Duty of Man." Ha, Job! now, indeed, have you triumphed — now are you safe from the tempter. Yes, Job; puff — puff — but keep your eyeballs fixed upon Plato! What a god-like head, eh, Job? What strength — yet what serenity in that magnificent brow! Yes; Plato, Job — Plato is —

"Smack" — "sma-a-ck" — "sma-a-a-a-ck-ck-ck!"

Astounded reader, will it be believed — was ever such effrontery, such hardihood known? We have heard of robbery beneath the gallows — of pockets picked with the fruit of picking pockets swinging in sight of the incorrigible thief — but that a man, with Plato in his eye, should commit a carnal sin with his lips!

Would we could show how Job Pippins kissed Lady Scipio Mannikin! Does the reader recollect the first four or five quick, sharp, splitting notes of the blackbird, pounced upon a worm — shrieking, whistling, exulting, hysterical? No; they want rapidity, intensity, volume. In our despair, we must even put up with the words of one of the housemaids, who, albeit, she was spared a sight of the operation, vowed that Job "tore up kisses by the very roots!" We fear, too, that the description of the maid may be thought obscure; however, we hope we know when to prefer feminine impressions to our own. And now,

gentle reader, it is our most painful duty to call your attention to a family picture. The last kiss is doubtless still ringing in your ears, and the roof-tree of Mannikin Hall still vibrating with the shock of kisses.

Imagine, most imaginative reader, a woman, young and lovely, starting at some loathsome thing; say, a boa at once. Her arms flung up — her lips wide apart — her eyes full of horror — her bosom indrawn by a loud, loud shriek — about to come! Such is Lady Scipio.

Next, behold a very comely young man at her feet — his hands clasped and shaking — his jaw dropt — his eyelids down — and his knees grinding the floor, in the desperate hope of falling through! Such is Job Pippins.

Now, attentive reader, look to the right, and you will see at the door a portly gentleman of fifty — his face, generally a lightish purple, now a tolerable black. Indeed his present colour, supported by a flattened nose and voluminous lips, for a brief moment make Lady Scipio a Desdemona. Such is the knight — such the outraged spouse!

Glaring over the shoulders of Sir Scipio are two sea-green eyes, the curious property of Samuel Spriage, the man of business — a sort of human lurcher — to the lord of the Hall.

One eye, and only a part of the nose of the footman, are visible between the arm of Sir Scipio and

the door-post. Though but fragments, they speak volumes.

Brief was the horrid pause. Sir Scipio — speechless and champing foam — seized the presented stick of Springe; and, raising it high in air, the skull of Job had been no better than a crushed egg-shell, had not the uplifted weapon happily caught the projecting prongs of an enormous pair of antlers hanging over the door. Thoughtless of the impediment, Sir Scipio flung his whole weight upon his arm — Springe pressed forward — the footman was no less impetuous, when — with a thunder that seemed to shake the steadfast earth — down came the honours of the chace — down fell the horns; and, assisted by Springe and the footman behind, down fell Sir Scipio upon them! Then indeed his lady shrieked; and well she might. Would not any woman scream, seeing her husband all but gored to death by antlers?

Sir Scipio roared and shouted, whilst Springe and the footman strove to relieve him of the horns; but, somehow, the more they tugged, the more Sir Scipio became entangled. The whole mansion was alarmed — servants of both sexes thronged to the spot — the family at the next house threw up their windows — and still poor Sir Scipio was as firmly fixed to the antlers, as though they were a part and parcel of his natural person. And then, roaring to be left to himself, when that indulgence was allowed him, he freed his body of the forky incumbrance with incredible dexterity.

The knight, with his clothes in very strips, fell into what was called his easy-chair. Pippins — with unheard of stupidity, for he had not taken to his heels — dropt upon his knees, and the spectators — their ears opening like hungry oysters — formed in a ring!

Sir Scipio seemed for a moment to borrow the orbs of his man of business; and heavily turning his knightly head, as though a weight had newly fallen there, he looked with very green eyes at his crimsoned wife, dyed that hue with fear — with agitation for her spouse. And then the knight, turning to Job Pippins, and lifting up a forefinger —

Had Sir Scipio been the spirit of ague — his forefinger the little wand with which he shook the bones of nations, Job had not trembled more vehemently as he looked upon it. People may judge somewhat of his emotion, when we state that the three shillings and sixpence in his left waistcoat-pocket jingled very audibly. The man himself might have acted the hypocrite, but who shall doubt the feeling declared through gold and silver?

And Job trembled; and his voice rattled in his throat; and, at length, shaking with compunction, yet sharpened to a scream by the intensity of its penitence, it cried, "I — I — I — couldn't help it!"

And Job Pippins could *not* help it.

CHAPTER III.

WHAT is man, woman, or even child, without character? The skeleton in the closet of an anatomist is less loathsome — hath stronger claims on our consideration — our sympathy. No matter though it be the bony outline of a condemned rogue; the penalty has been paid, and with commendable charity we bear no malice towards the departed. Such was the placability of Sir Scipio. With a proper abhorrence of crime, he would hang the knave who should steal an apple, and then utter a religious discourse on his relics — on mortal weakness, temptation, and the last account. Whether Job feared this double purpose of the knight — or, whether, urged by his affrighted conscience, he fled the town — we care not to seek. This, however, we know: some fortnight after the affair at the Hall — (by some it was called an assault, by some an intended elopement; whilst some swore that, but for the kindness of Sir Scipio, Job had been trussed at the assizes,) — the criminal was snugly ensconced in the chimney-corner of the Hare-and-Hounds, a sufficiently respectable ale-house some ten miles from Job's native town. It had been his determination to travel straight to London; but Sally, the daughter, stood at the door of the inn, and — how could he help it? — Job entered. Job possessed in no mean degree three things — according to Heloise — most dangerous to the sex: he wrote well, talked well, and

sang well. Hence, his reputation in divers kitchens; and as he was one of those wise people —

"Qui ne trouvent le laurier bon,
Que pour la sauce et le jambon," —

or, as we would translate it —

"Who think the bays are all a sham,
Unless they flavour sauce or ham," —

Job was content to take his reward from the spit; and, after all, how much of what by simple people is thought fame, is merely sought for as the representative of so many legs of mutton. We may make fame an angelic creature on the tombs of poets; but how often is she really invoked as a bouncing landlady? May not the noblest niche be the larder? Let us not forget Job.

A few days after the arrival of our fugitive at the inn, he possessed not a penny; and having, for at least a week, lived on his accomplishments, his landlord began to cast significant glances doorwards. It was three o'clock and Job had not dined. With his nose flattened against the window-pane, Job sat with his eye fixed upon an opposite milestone ("120 miles to London,") when who should amble up to the house but Cuttles, the clerk of Job's parish! Job felt himself dipt in cold water.

"I was mortal certain I should find him here," cried a voice that to Job seemed to saw through the very wainscot. "Service to ye, Miss Shally — nobody run away with you yet? Well, well — stop till I'm young again, and" — and what was to be the conse-

quence to Sally, Job heard not; but in another second the door opened, and he heard in the sweet twang of his native town —

"So, Mr. Pippins!"

The speaker was a stringy little man of about fifty; with one of those faces which have but two definite expressions, frowning command and simpering servility. On the present occasion he wore his hardest look; which, nevertheless, was not so terrible as the fright of Job would make it. But the fact is, Job saw not Cuttles in his physical truth; no, he heard the greeting of the clerk, and before his eyes appeared the executioner of the county holding in his ready hand a massive chain of wedding-rings. Each syllable uttered by Cuttles was a rattling of the links. Conscience is terribly imaginative. Job, it will be seen, had good cause for his perturbation.

"Well, Job, as what is done can't be undone," (now, whence Cuttles had culled this fragment of philosophy we know not) "we must make the best of the matter." Job whistled. "Now, Job, I come to you as a friend; and so, from first to last, tell me how it all happened." The parish-clerk crossed his knees, having edged his chair towards the offender.

"She was always a bold thing," said Job, sullenly.

"Ha!" cried Cuttles, and he gaped as though he was to hear with his mouth. "Well?"

"And one fine evening last June, as I was leaning, looking into the churchyard — I 'd been to shave Mrs. Dodds's poodle — I shaved Dodds when he died —

I — I —" Job, wheeling round, looked very gravely in the face of Cuttles, and asked, a little solemnly, "Did you ever taste the ale at this house?"

Cuttles evidently knew something of the human heart; for, without a reply, he knocked and cried, "Sally, a mug of ale."

Pippins meekly added, "the best."

"Yes; you was staring into the churchyard?" suggested Cuttles, as Job set down the emptied mug.

"Why, the poodle brought it into my head, and I was looking for Dodds's stone, when she came behind me, and said, 'Job, you merry tinker'" —

Cuttles stared, and pushed his chair away, "She never was so familiar?"

"Wasn't she?" cried Job, with something like a groan, and a look of bitterness. "Wasn't she?"

"But what expressions! Well, there is no knowing any of 'em," observed the parish-clerk.

"Like bees — you never see their sting till you feel it," cried Pippins. "'Well, Job,' said she, 'you merry tinker,'" — again the parish-clerk, like a monkey watching for nuts, lifted up his eyebrows, "'give me a kiss!' And saying no more, she threw her arms about my neck, and gave me such a salute, a team two fields away went gallop off at the smack."

"And so meek — so modest — so delicate!" cried the wondering Cuttles. "Well, Job, if all this be true, you have been hardly used. However, being come upon the business, I must hear all. And after that, Job," —

"After that, I — you wouldn't think it, Master Cuttles," — said Job, with a confidential air — "but, upon my honour, Sally's father not going out, I hav'n't used my teeth since seven this morning."

Cuttles, with mysterious generosity, ordered something to eat, whilst Job timidly pressed the mug on the notice of Sally, who quickly produced cold fowl and ham, and a new supply of ale — the best. Whilst Job employed his teeth, Cuttles filled up the pause with brandy and water. Hunger and thirst somewhat abated, Cuttles returned to the examination, "Well, Job, she kissed you, you say, and after that?" —

"Mr. Cuttles," said Job, and the clerk stared at the altered tone of the speaker, "I don't see why you should be so curious — you may take away, Sally — I know the worst, and there's an end of it."

"The worst!" echoed Cuttles. "I've brought you twenty pounds."

"I tell ye, Cuttles, it's no use. I'll shoulder walnut first."

"Walnut!"

"Ay, go for a soldier. A drum before her tongue. Four words are as good as a thousand — I won't marry her."

"Marry — marry Lady Mannikin!" and the parish-clerk stared, confounded.

"Why, Cuttles, didn't you mean — eh — didn't you come about Susan Biggs?"

"Phoo! — By the way, we have made Joe, the boy at the White Horse, marry her; yes, he had five

pounds and a leg of mutton dinner. — I come about the affair with her ladyship."

"I — I couldn't help it," said Job, evidently relieved by the information of the clerk. "I suppose all the world abuse me?"

"It was very wicked, but you have friends, Job." Pippins looked doubtingly. "It certainly was not right, after the kindness of Sir Scipio, to seek to deprive him of her ladyship," — Pippins gaped — "to seduce the wife of your patron," — Pippins stared — "to take advantage of his confidence to fly with her to a foreign land — to —"

"Mr. Cuttles!" roared Job, striking the table, and leaping to his feet.

"However," continued the clerk, unmoved by Job's vehemence — "however, there are Christian souls who feel for you. A committee of ladies have taken your case into their consideration; and though they doubtless think you a most shocking person — indeed, after the hearsay evidence, there can be no doubt of the guilt of both of ye — nevertheless, they send you by me, as a trifling mark of their respect, I mean compassion, twenty pounds."

"Twenty pounds!" echoed the bewildered Pippins.

"And more," continued Cuttles; "Miss Daffodil, the chair-woman of the committee, bade me say, that should Sir Scipio, preparatory to a divorce, take the matter into court, the damages, whatever they might be, should be defrayed; that though you were a dangerous, wicked man, you should be held harmless."

"Twenty pounds — court — damages!" exclaimed Pippins, in a breath. "What *do* you mean?"

"Pish!" answered the clerk, with a wink, and emphatically thrusting his fore-finger into the belly of Job; "pish! Now, hearken, lad; don't think to leave us; come back; take a better shop; and, my word for't, this little matter will bring you treble custom."

"Do you think so?" asked Pippins, after a pause.

"Certain; and if Sir Scipio should only bring his action —"

"Action!" cried Pippins.

— "Your fortune is made." So saying, Cuttles, with a sagacious nod, finished his brandy-and-water; then looked benevolently at Pippins.

Job was puzzled; again he asked, but with deeper seriousness, "Mr. Cuttles, what *do* you mean?"

"There — there 's the twenty pounds: you, of course, will pay the reckoning:" and Cuttles, indifferent to the question, put down the money. "And now, Job, you rogue, do tell me the whole matter;" and the clerk rubbed his hands, with epicurean anticipation. "Tell me — you and her ladyship were going to France? I hear the servants say France; nay, that the postillion — but come, Job" —

"Mr. Cuttles, losing my wits, I do confess I kissed Lady Scipio Mannikin; I — I — couldn't help it; and then" —

"Yes, yes; and then?" —

"And then, as though I had done murder, I fell upon my knees; and then, Sir Scipio coming in, had

well nigh ended me; and then, I found myself flung out of the door; and then — and here I am! As for her ladyship, they who speak a word against her are cowards and villains."

"Then it isn't all true?" asked the clerk, staggered by the earnestness of Job.

"The Lord forgive all liars!" cried Job, "there's nothing true but what I've said."

"And there was nothing — nothing but a stolen kiss?"

"Nothing!" vociferated Job, in so loud a tone that it brought Sally and her father into the room. "Nothing!" and Job solemnised his assertion with an oath.

Immediately, Cuttles snatched the twenty pounds from the table, and took his hat. "As such is the case, Mr. Pippins — as there has been no ingratitude — no violence in the affair — I shall take back the money to the ladies. As they have subscribed under misrepresentation, the cash must certainly be returned to them." And in three minutes the clerk was in the saddle trotting homewards to lay his stewardship before the fair committee.

"What a fool to speak the truth!" said the landlord, when he had learned the story. "What a fool!"

Job coloured to the eyes, and raising himself to his full height, said, with a certain air of pride — "Master Nip, I couldn't help it."

CHAPTER IV.

"109 to London."

Mile-stones to the penniless adventurer are serious things. To yourself, prosperous reader, now carried post onward, and now comfortably seated on Jessy, your mouse-coloured mare, mile-stones are no more than so many lumps of granite; but how different to the poor traveller, with his anxious face turned, for the first time, towards that land of milk and honey and money — London! Worked on by his hopes or fears, every stone that leads him nearer to the goal, speaks better or worse tidings; may to his fancy assume the face of kindly greeting or squint-eyed scorn. Thus, every block may be as of a long line of squab, uncouth guards, such as we see in Arab fairy-land, each growing in hideousness upon its neighbour: and thus, more and more scared by the low brows, hanging lips, and savage eyes of the petrified figures, the foot-sore traveller feels his courage fail and his heart fairly die within him, as he passes the last terrible dwarf, and snuffs the smoke of the mysterious city. If, as the great teacher says, there be sermons in smallest pebbles, what profound thoughts, what glorious images, what ennobling, sweetening sympathies may have been struck from out a London mile-stone!

"109 to London." Job Pippins sat upon the stone, staring at the sinking sun. The sun sank, and Job turning his head, saw the London waggon slowly

approaching. In an instant he was greeted by the waggoner with loud cries for help. Job ran to the waggon, and to his astonishment saw the bay cob of Sir Scipio Mannikin tied behind. Ere Job could put a question, the waggoner showed his teeth and scratched his head, with an air of satisfaction; "I say, I ha' got a dead un in waggon."

"A dead man!" cried Job, with more horror than curiosity. "A dead man!"

"Picked un up, in middle of road; the cob war standin' loike a lamb beside un. I shall tak' un to next house, the Barley Mow."

"For God's sake, stop!" exclaimed Job, and jumped into the waggon. In an instant he recognised the all but departed knight. Struck by apoplexy, he had fallen from his horse. In less than a minute, Job had torn off Sir Scipio's coat, bound his arm, and produced a razor, the waggoner looking silently and serenely on. However, when he beheld the weapon, he asked — "What wilt do, mun — what wilt do?"

"Bleed him," replied Job, with exquisite composure. "I fear his heart has stopped."

"Loikely — I do think it be Grinders, the lawyer of —. Cut un deep;" and the waggoner opened his eyes to watch if the lawyer really had red blood, or japan ink. "Cut un deep," he cried encouragingly, "though if it be Grinders, by what I hear, it be a shame to disturb un."

"Grinders! pshaw, 't s Sir Scipio Mannikin."

"Wounds!" roared the waggoner, "noa, mun, noa;

don't meddle wi' such folks in my waggon." Saying this, he sought to stay the hand of Job, at the moment applying the razor to the arm of the sufferer; but in so attempting, drove the weapon deep into the limb. Job turned pale, and the waggoner groaned and trembled. "We shall be hanged, mun, hanged — hanged — hanged!" he shouted forth, and corroborating echo blandly repeated — "hanged — hanged — hanged." The waggoner untied the cob, mounted it, and galloped away like any St. George, leaving Pippins in the twilight with his lacerated patient. The blood flowed, and Job began to count the pulsations of the apoplectic knight, who in about ten minutes came to a dim consciousness; for beholding Job standing over him with a drawn razor, he started back, and his teeth chattered. At this instant, the gallop of horses was heard, and Job looking out, beheld the waggoner flying along on the knight's cob, followed by a barb, which, from its height, points, and wooden paces, was doubtless descended from the famous steed of Troy, carrying a short round man, in a broad-brimmed hat, who, at a distance, looked like a black cushion on horseback. Providentially, as the knight afterwards observed, the landlord of the Barley Mow had broken his leg correcting his wife, and had called in Doctor Saffron, who, providentially again, happened to be Sir Scipio's surgeon. Doctor Saffron took up the wounded arm, and looked at Job — "Is this your doing?" Job looked yes, but spoke not. "Miracles do happen in our art, Sir Scipio," said Saffron con-

solingly, "so perhaps the arm may be saved. Bleeding, fellow!" he cried, turning fiercely upon Job — "I call it capital carving."

"I couldn't help it," said Pippins, and he wiped his razor.

"And you found Sir Scipio lying in the road?" said the doctor.

"Rolled up loike a hedge-pig," said the waggoner.

"Ha!" and the doctor caught the eye of the knight — "Ha!" he shook his head three times — "Ha!" turtle — turtle!"

The waggoner stared, for how was he to know that Saffron alluded to a turtle-feast (we have before spoken of it,) to which the doctor oddly enough, as he thought, was not invited? A vehicle being obtained from the Barley Mow, Sir Scipio, in charge of the surgeon, was removed to Mannikin Hall.

A long, weary walk lay before Job; nevertheless, the waggoner sternly refused the hospitality of his creeping ark, and, the night advancing, Pippins looked hopelessly around for a place of lodging. Thrice he resolved to try the Barley Mow, and — for he was known there — thrice he paused. Sauntering undecided onwards, he saw a speck of light suddenly burn through the distant trees. Leaping a hedge, Job made direct to the beacon, and now losing its friendly ray, and now again beholding it burning, like the eye of a good fairy, through the gloom, he stood before the very hut, which in size and shape seemed no big-

ger than a giant's lantern. Job approached the door, when he was suddenly stopped by a long-drawn breath, proceeding as he thought from the earth. The light disappeared, and he bent with his out-stretched hands towards the ground; he felt nothing, but again he heard the sound as from one heavily sleeping. In an instant a growl rattled in the throat of the house-dog; and a feminine voice cried, in a calm, cold tone, "Down, bitch! Who's there?" Job's heart leapt when he heard it was a woman; and calling up the sweetest notes of his voice, he proceeded to speak of long travel, hunger, destitution, and other small annoyances, the bitch growling what to Job's ears seemed contempt and disbelief of his history. Inwardly cursing the bitch, Job listened for human speech; not a further word did the woman utter, but gave over the traveller to the uncompromising animal within, that to every new solicitation of Job, growled still deeper denial. Job expended his best words and his blandest tones on inexorable dog's flesh: at length he turned from the hut, and was again about to seek the open road. Irresolute, he thought of the woman's voice and paused: there was something in its sound that still cried in his heart, that cried in his ears, "Turn again, Job Pippins." Job stood, with his eyes upon the ground, when he heard near footsteps. Quickly sheltering himself behind a tree, he saw three men proceed towards the hut; at a single knock the door was opened, and they entered. As the door swung back, Job beheld a most comfortable blaze, and at the same

instant a gust of wind chilled him to the bones. The blast brought resolution; again Job's knuckles rattled at the door, and quickly at the summons appeared a man with no hospitable countenance. Job briefly told his wants. Had he talked to a grim head carved in oak, Job had moved it just as soon to sympathy. Its owner drew back, and was about to fling-to the door with emphatic denial, when his eye gleamed, and his mouth widened into a grin, and passing his horny fingers through his grey wiry hair, he cried, "Humph! It's cold, too—well, come in. Moll, the stool." The thing ordered was thrown towards Job, who sank resignedly upon it, expanding his breast, and spreading out his palms to a roaring coal and wood fire. Job tried to look at the best possible ease; and yet the place in which he found himself, and the group surrounding him, were not calculated to endow him with serenest feelings.

The walls of the hut were formed of wattles coated with mud; the whole roofed with thatch and furze. It seemed a hovel raised for a season — a place thrown up by stealth; a cabin for a Timon or a coiner. The furniture was of a mixed kind: on a table made of rough deals was an elegant draught-board of ebony and mother-of-pearl; beside it a small Etruscan bronze lamp. The stool, hospitably awarded to Pippins, was the only legitimate seat; the three masters of the dwelling — for each seemed magisterial — supporting themselves on empty casks. In one corner lay various articles of clothing on a heap of straw, dry leaves,

and rushes — cloaks, coats, jackets, some of them evidently made for others than their present possessors. Job looked at the opposite wall, where a large fragment of mirror — Eve had her fountain, Molly her looking-glass — held by nails driven into the baked mud, showed him his company. As he looked — despite his vivacity and constitutional courage — Job somewhat desponded; did once or twice shift himself uneasily, as a fresh-whipped schoolboy, on his form. Truly Job saw no hospitable smiles to comfort and assure him. The man, the elder of the three, who let him in, was of middle stature: a fellow with the eyes and beak of an eagle, and the throat of a bull. He sat with his arms squared upon the table, leaning his chin upon his hands; he looked like a wild beast ere it springs. He wore a loose white flannel jacket, old leathern breeches and a striped shirt, which, open at the neck, his broad tanned chest looked like a worn hide. And so sat Phineas, and glared at Job.

Bats and Mortlake were much younger than their friend; — let us say, friend Phineas. Bats was ugly to a merit. His face was scarlet, as if newly flayed; his eyes small and weak, one of them ever glancing at his nose, that turned a widened nostril up to meet it; his teeth were scattered, and stood like rusty broken nails; his brow he might have covered with his two fingers, and hair, of vivid red, in close, lumpy curls, like a beacon fire, crowned the height. This Gorgon, be it noted by the way, had dared to look at Molly; and to him she became as stone. Mortlake,

the junior of the three, had a reckless, gipsy look, that might have been called handsome, but for the scowl that too frequently darkened it. The pair sat, now glancing at Job, and now at Phineas, whose sudden hospitality had evidently puzzled them. A pace from these stood Molly, leaning, with folded arms, against the wall. There was something wild and dangerous in her demeanour; but nothing vulgar. She had the figure of a huntress — tall, round, and finely developed. Her eyes were black as death and swift as light; her dark hair hung in long curls down her cheeks and back, bringing into fine relief the pale, yet perfectly healthy flesh. Her swelling, disdainful lips showed a glimpse of teeth white as whitest curds. Job gasped as he caught her face in the glass! A queen in her coronation robes had not so much awed him; she seemed so strange a mixture of the angel and the devil. Silence having continued for a painful time, Bats, in the depth of his humanity, tried to lead the conversation. "What 's o'clock?" he asked.

At this instant, the silver sound of a repeater was heard in the hut, when the amazed Job jumped to his feet, and pulled from his waistcoat-pocket a splendid gold watch. He held it in his hand, looking aghast. The eyes of Bats and Mortlake glistened as they leered at the chronometer; Phineas showed no surprise, having marked the glittering chain and seals dangling from Job's pocket ere he entered the hovel. "I say, friend," said Phineas calmly, "time must be

worth something to you, to score it with such a watch as that."

"It isn't mine," cried Job, and the perspiration broke upon his forehead. "It isn't mine."

"Ha! ha! ha!" and the three laughed at the unnecessary information.

"A mistake," cried Pippins. "I got it in the oddest way, but I couldn't help it — I tell you it isn't mine!"

"Ha! ha! ha!" again roared Job's hearers.

"I — oh Lord! — I shall be hanged," said Pippins, as he thought to himself.

"In course," observed Mortlake, comfortingly; "some day we all shall be hanged. Then why the devil should you make such a fuss about it?"

"These gentlemen," said Molly, with a wicked smile, "are so partic'lar."

"You can't think how I came by it!" exclaimed Job, and again the fellows chuckled in derision. Job hastily felt his pockets, lest he had other of his neighbour's goods unwittingly about him, when he pulled out a handkerchief fairly soaked with Sir Scipio's blood. At sight of this, Phineas rose with a grave look — Mortlake gave an expressive chuck — and Bats uttered a low, long, accusing whistle.

"What! he was game, was he? Well, as it's all over now, tell us," said Phineas, "how it happened."

"First tell us," broke in the cautious Bats, "where's the body?"

Vain was it for Job to persist in the truth — vain to dwell minutely on the operation performed on the knight — or the accident which had transferred the watch from the fob of its lawful owner to the waistcoat-pocket of its present possessor; — all he said was only met with increasing peals of laughter. "Well, gentlemen," said Job, half-nettled by their merriment, half-fearing their nods and looks, "dark as it is, and long as the road may be, I shall set out for Mannikin Hall. Sir Scipio at least must believe that I *only* borrowed his watch to count his pulse." Saying this, Job made for the door; when Phineas, setting his broad back full against it, remarked, with provoking gravity, "Travel to-night? You don't know who you may meet: how do you know you mayn't be robbed?"

"Yes," said Bats, "you'd better stay with us, there's a great deal of opposition on this road." And without waiting for a reply, Phineas made fast the door, crying the while, "Molly, the gin."

Immediately, the unresisting Job found himself again upon his stool, a horn of gin drawn by the hand of Molly between his fingers, Molly herself, with her large lustrous eyes melting on him, on his knee, and his three new friends ranged before him. The wind grew louder without, and the fire ruddier and warmer within — the faces of the three hosts, as the light played upon them, in a short time looked to Job faces of the jolliest, frankest dogs that ever emptied

pitcher — the mud wall lost their darkness — Molly lost her scorn — and Job found his voice.

"Another horn — one more," cried the princely Phineas, "and the song will melt in your throat, and run out."

"A little water with it," said Job, with a late temperance, for his eyes stood like doll's eyes in his head; "a little water," and Job somewhat coyly held forth the vessel.

"Well, if you must; but I never mix my liquor at home; the water about here is so bad." And saying this, Bats filled up the half-emptied horn of Job with pure spirit. "And now, now the song."

Job, as we have before remarked, was a singer. He had ditties for all complexions; black, brown, or fair, he could with small preparation adapt himself to the locks and eyes of the presiding divinity. Taking another draft of inspiration — looking a passionate look at Molly — and seizing her wrist, and drawing her hand half through his hand, he held the compressed points of her beating fingers as he warbled —

Oh! my Molly's a thief, I must own;
Only look at her eyes,
They belong to the skies,
And her voice for some angel's is known.

Oh, my Molly 's in debt I avow —
Yes, she owes for her lip
Where the honey-bees sip —
For her breath to the jessamine bough.

Oh, my Molly is cruel as fair;
Once a raven was shot,
Snowy white without spot —
She had ta'en all his black for her hair.

Who my Molly is, hope not to guess —
No; she is not the girl
Who talks di'mond and pearl,
For what gem in the world 's worth her *yes*?

Oh, my —

But at this stage of the slip-shod verse, Job fell from the stool, breaking down in the unfinished song. As he lay insensible upon the earth, Phineas bent over him, but was startled by a knock at the door.

"Who the devil 's that?" muttered Bats.

CHAPTER V.

Bats cautiously opened the door, and one stride brought the new visitor close to the prostrate Pippins.

"What carrion 's this?" asked the new comer, jerking his toe against the shoulder of the bacchanal, happily insensible of the enquiry. Bats was about to explain, when the querist stopped him by a gesture of impatient command, and with an educated twitch of the hand, possessed himself of the repeater, temptingly peeping from the pocket of Job. Phineas's face fell into shadow at the dexterity of the operator. If there be, as we wish to believe, honour among thieves, sure we are it is alloyed with envy: a man with a hand like a ham cannot complacently view the snaky palm of a more perfect brother. Hence the bile of Phineas at the adroitness of Skinks, who, indeed, bore about his person ample outside evidence of superior talent. His coat was finer, his — but we must try to show the reader Skinks.

Our new friend was a highway Hercules. Could he have condescended to eat what dull people call honest bread — that is, as Skinks thought, bread without any butter — he might have passed a useful life in a caravan. Many a man, with far less pretensions than Skinks, has lived very respectably as a giant. With no assistance from the shoemaker, Skinks stood six feet seven. No man had a more ingenuous face, for he looked the varlet that he really was. His skin was sallow from midnight watching; (his works, his pistols, constantly smelt of midnight oil;) his voice had sunk, beneath night air and brandy, to a raw and rugged bass; and his temper, tried by several juries, had suffered somewhat from the ordeal. His language was generally laconic, but sustaining and sympathetic. Many a trembling, sinking passenger had he, with one word, prevailed upon to stand. His strength was amazing; for often, like Milo, had he stopped a carriage in full career with only his fore-finger on a trigger. So much for the man of clay. His dress was worthy of its tenant; he wore a claret coat, "smeared" with lace that passed for gold — black velvet breeches, with boots — certainly from the last of the ogres, who, when we were young, was wont to take three leagues at a step. A three-corner hat, bound and looped with bright metal, half-cocked upon his head, fearfully harmonised with a brace of pistols in his belt. A huge pigtail hung, like a dead snake, down his back. Such was the man who now with folded arms looked contemptuously below on Pippins

— asleep and dreaming — we know not what, for there may be deep things in drunkenness.

And where was Molly? Drawn to her full height, her face flushed, her bosom heaving, and her terribly black eyes fairly eating the Colossus before her — he all the while as insensible of the attention as his prototype of Rhodes. "Lucius, Lucius," cried Molly — and at length Skinks, by a growl, acknowledged the appeal. "Molly!" and he sat down, and Molly sank upon his knee, and wreathed her arms about his neck — Skinks, in deep contemplation, slowly winding up the repeater he had plucked from Job, the heart-strings of Phineas cracking at the sound; and Bats gasping and glaring with jealousy at the blessed pair; for Skinks had a bear's love for Molly. It might be he was drawn towards her by purest sympathy; her father had been hanged for shooting a gamekeeper.

"What luck?" Mortlake ventured to enquire of the serious Skinks. "Any thing upon the road?"

"The road!" echoed Skinks, with the disgust of a man who feels he has mistaken his profession — "That a man of my standing should be brought to rob on foot! May the man that shot my mare — well, well," and Skinks ground his teeth, strangled a rising groan, and breaking into a whistle, tapped with his fingers on the back of Molly — Bats choking in commendable silence. "This is the first prize I've drawn these ten days," and Skinks somewhat ostentatiously displayed r Scipio's repeater.

"'T is easy to bag the bird when another has springed it," said Phineas, and his lip quivered.

"What now," growled Lucius, "what are ye but hands and feet — dead flesh, if I had not the head to move it? Jack-of-the-Gibbet, though a scarecrow of ten years' hanging, would be as serviceable a rogue. Springed it! Well then, we 'll take Blenheim from Marlborough, and give the victory to the drummers."

"Why, in such matters," sullenly replied Phineas, "I don't know if there ar'n't sometimes worse used folks than drummers."

"Hold thy tongue, Phin," counselled Molly — "thou 'lt ruffle Lucius."

"The hangman ruffle him and band him, too!" muttered Phineas indistinctly.

"Who growled there — thou, Phineas, or the dog?" and Skinks set Molly off his knee, and advancing towards the rebel, looked him into quaking. Skinks stood for an answer.

"The dog," said Phineas, in a tone not unworthy of the quadruped. Skinks sank tranquilly on his seat, and Molly resumed her throne upon his knee.

"That 's the worst of Phin," cried Bats: "he doesn't know common sense. He 'd rob a captain of all that makes his commission worth a farthing; the profit and glory of other people's work."

"Be still, Bats — be still," and Molly knitted her brows, and turned towards the offender, who glowed

a deeper scarlet at the reproof. His very hair seemed to grow redder as Molly spoke.

"It 's meanness of spirit," pursued the quickened Bats, "to quarrel about a trinket like that, Phin. All such knick-knacks are the fair perquisites of the captain for expenses and news upon the road."

"Well said, Bats!" and Molly smiled graciously upon the talking snake about to sting her.

"To be sure; I shouldn't wonder if the captain means to give that watch to the blue-eyed girl at the Plough. She 's a kind thing, and the captain loves blue eyes, Phin: he says they 're so innocent."

Egypt's asp was not a surer reptile than Bats. Molly, struck to the heart, where an old, old wound was festering, sprang to the earth, quivering, like an arrow newly fixed, with passion. Her eyes looked molten with rage, her large throat dilated to a pillar; her coal-black tresses were stirred as by the air, and her lips moving with inarticulate sounds, she leapt like a cat on Skinks, and tearing the watch from his pocket, with the swing of an Amazon dashed it to the floor. Skinks jumped to his feet, whilst the wheels of the repeater prettily described circles around him. It is the privilege of beauty to kill time.

Skinks could ordinarily master his feelings, but not when bound up with a gold watch and chain. He applied a terribly significant monosyllable to Molly, and with his clenched mallet-power fist, struck —

Whimper not, sweet Cupid! Dry thine eyes, and

feed thy mother's doves — and thou, fair Venus, shriek not a second shriek — and ye, eternal Graces, huddle not, like frighted fowl, together. The face of Molly was not profaned; at his last public hour Skinks was spared that tighter pang; for, happily, Bats rushing before the fair, received on his more appropriate nose a blow that fairly pasted it to his cheeks. Down, of course, he fell; but falling, cushioned his *os sacrum* on the belly of Pippins, who, by the profoundest grunt, acknowledged the deposit. But the blood of Bats, as might be seen from his nose, was up, and in a second so was Bats himself. Seizing a bludgeon, nearly as hard as Skinks's fist, he made at his assailant; when Molly — we will not stay to analyse the mixed feelings of gratitude and love that moved her — clawed up the draught-board, and striking it with vehement precision on the skull of her preserver, she split the checkered tablet, holding the astonished Bats, like an unruly pig in a collar of wood. Had Skinks been a common man, he might have struck his powerless foe; but Skinks had magnanimity; and tickled by the dilemma of his enemy, he roared a laugh; and Mortlake and Phineas, like true courtiers, joined in chorus. Bats dropt his club, and wiped his nose. Molly, releasing her prisoner, folded her arms, and with the look of an injured empress, sank, wordless, on a tub. Bats still tried coaxingly to raise his nose, though looking as he would not have objected to a new one, cut by Taliacotian cunning from the heart of Skinks.

The impressive sound uttered by Pippins on the fall of Bats, awakened the attention of the captain to the sleeper, "Where did you pick him up, Bats?" asked Skinks, in a most honied tone. Bats was not to be mollified by such peculiar attention: still his soul rankled with his late injury, still he glared, and, silent still, he tried to raise his nose. Phineas gave the necessary information; in few words condensed the protestation of Job as to the accident which had possessed him of the watch, and then, with a speaking wink of the eye, pointed to the bloody napkin!

"Got it honestly, eh?" cried Skinks, with the smile of a Judas. "Ha! the thief 's above his business. Pick up the pieces, Phin;" and he pointed to two or three fragments of the watch glittering on the floor. "Let 's look at his honest face," and the obedient Phineas turned Job upon his back, Job having rolled over when relieved of Bats. Skinks took a burning brand from the logs, and stooping near Job's feet, stretched it within singeing distance of his cheek. "Ha! ha! ha! an old bird, my lads. I know him as I know my nails — a nursery thief — a bread-and-butter footpad. Why, he was tried at York for stealing a coral and bells from the mayoress's baby. I saw him in the dock; somehow there was a crack in the indictment, and Bill Ticket — for that 's his name — crept safely through."

It is to be feared that when nature made Job Pippins she did not break the die, but in the same

mould made one William Ticket; for that the story of Skinks was cold, malicious slander we cannot believe. No; in taking to himself the property of Pippins, he was sustained by the virtuous conviction that he was punishing a too lucky, a too dissimulating thief. William Ticket was despoiled, happily for Ticket, in the person of Job Pippins.

"I 'll tell ye what we 'll do," said Skinks, oracularly; "we 'll" —

"Ugh!" roared Pippins, flinging up his legs as though under a galvanic battery; the toes of his thick-soled shoes striking the under jaw of Skinks against its superior brother, like a plate of iron. Skinks blasphemed; and Bats, with a smile, at length took his fingers from his nose.

Job was not a salamander; a spark from the blazing wood had lighted on his cheek, as the too near Skinks was about to pass sentence — a sentence, we fear, in which the jaw of the judge was thereupon made more evident than his justice.

Sentence was passed; immediately carried into execution; and where, and in what state was the culprit; where was Job?

CHAPTER VI.

It was a pleasant morning in the month of fickle April; the sun was up in his brightness — the fields steamed with odours — the birds sang and twittered — the limping hare now hopped along the mead, and now sat and licked her dewy paws — the rooks cawed their sweet domestic cares — the hedgehog rejoiced in his new-warmed blood — the snail, like creeping envy, crawled its slimy way — the lambkins frisked, and still Job Pippins slept.

Thy hand, reader; step this way. Thou art in a most delicious meadow, within three yards of the sleeper. See yon dry ditch; there — there lies Pippins!

We paused, and our heart rose within us as we looked upon the dreamer. Touched by the softening influence of the season — for in spring-time the hardest heart may become a ball of honey — we exclaimed, "Ha! here is penniless worth upon *its* couch of nettles; thorns at its side, nightshade at its head, and crawling, creeping creatures round about. Poor soul! The toad still squats at thine ear, and the raven is thy constant serenader!" Saying this, we walked on rejoicing.

Job woke, and as he woke his temples were pierced by nails driven to the head by one short stroke, and then some half-dozen lancets were struck into his skull, and his eyes were turned to two lenses, burning

hot, and his tongue was an unmanageable bit of hard, dry leather, retaining a high flavour of the tan. In daily prose, Job felt the last night's liquor.

Job was in his shirt; and, that "most domestic" vestment was stained with accusing blots of blood. Whether he had merely assisted at a tragedy, or had been a principal, was a doubt that, for a second, withered him like lightning. Then it all came upon him — the hut — Molly — the drink — the — the — and then he passed into that confine where darkness swallows all things. An insect ticked its little note. "The watch!" cried Job, and stood upon his feet; the trees, and fields, and herds, whirling round him — and the blood glaring like red fire — and Job, gaspingly applying his hand to his flesh, and feeling that at least he ought to have a very serious wound.

It was, we say, a balmy day in April, when Job Pippins, reduced to his last garment, stood in a field with the wide world about him. Hatless, shoeless, hoseless, he stood upon the grass, the bold zephyrs playing with his shirt — his tattered flag of terrible distress. And Job began to feel the sickness of hunger; he looked at the cows, and yearned for his breakfast. Job resolved and re-resolved. Should he try to regain the hut, whence he had been so inhospitably sprited? Then he thought, what availed a naked man against four men and one woman? Should he run to the first house and publish the whole story? Again, who would put faith in a man with so slender a wardrobe? At this moment of

indecision, a bull in the next field, annoyed or scandalised at the sanguine blots of Job, leapt the low fence, and unhesitatingly ran at him. Job paused no longer, but made for the next meadow, and scaling a five-barred gate, saved himself in the main road, the bull shaking his horns, and casting a reproachful look at the fugitive. The destitution of Job was perfect, as he thought, without a new affliction; a few seconds before, and he could have dared fate to do worse, in the firm belief of its impotence. Vain, blind man! He was then the sole proprietor of a whole shirt; and now he stood in the London road, with almost all the hinder part of his one garment impaled on the dead brambles surmounting the fatal five-barred gate. The retreat of Job was most ignominious; he had not even saved his colours.

Job stood in the road, his heart sinking deeper and deeper still, as he wistfully beheld his tattered property held by the thorns, and still vigilantly guarded by the bull, who to Job looked as though he felt the full importance of the trophy. Job at length with a disdainful action turned his back upon the bull, who took the insult with the most commendable philosophy.

And now, thinks the reader, Job is at the zero of his fortune. He is naked, hungry, penniless, and where shall he find a friend? The river — yonder river, that like a silver thread intersects those emerald fields — that shall be unto him clothes, meat, and lodging. Mercy on us! Suicide? No, no; Job had a just value of

life: when it was only worth throwing away, his opinion was, that nothing further could hurt it. The river, it will be seen, was Job's Pactolus.

Quitting his foe, Job made for the stream, while his memory peopled its banks with a hundred racing, leaping, shouting school-fellows, with whom, despising birch — despising the deep moral of the primer tale, in which the impartial pedagogue flogged alike for swimming and for sinking — Job was wont, in boyish days, to dive. Job sighed as he thought of those happy, reckless hours: then what was a shirt to him? His father bought it, and his mother made it.

Job crawled and slinked across the field, and was already among a clump of alders, overhanging the stream. Was the great enemy of man cooling his burning limbs in the bright waters? Or had some pitying angel, softened by the nakedness of Job, alighted among the trees? Was it a temptation of the devil, or was it the beneficent gift of a kind spirit? Job was perplexed: well he might be.

Reader, put thyself in the moiety of the shirt worn by Job; think thyself thus naked, weary, hungry, destitute; and then imagine a very handsome suit of clothes — hat — gloves — shoes — walking-cane — all that "makes the happy man," lying, a golden waif, at thy foot, — no visible second person near. What wouldst thou do? Hear what Job did.

Job sat himself upon the grass, changed his equivocal shirt for the ample piece of ruffled "aired snow" before him, tried an experiment with the shoes and

stockings, which answered the fondest hopes of the essayist, — girded his loins with the providential pair of breeches — donned the vest and coat, — took his — yes, *his* — hat, gloves, and stick, placing the cravat in his pocket, to be tied in moments of better leisure, and — Job was always a fast walker — in three minutes Job was again in the main road. Again he passed the noted gate: there stood the bull, his glaring eye still upon the remnant of the shirt. As Job glanced at the rag, he flourished his cane, and smiled supreme contempt.

Job journeying onward, something weighty struck at his leg. He put his hand in his coat pocket, and pulled out a purse; it contained eight guineas and as many dollars. This was too much; Job sank against a tree, and overcome, one hand holding the purse, and the other placed upon his heart, thanked Providence!

How long Job might have dwelt in the grateful reverie we know not, had he not been disturbed in his thanksgiving by the noise of an approaching cart rattling along at full speed. Two men were in it, who, as they passed, greeted Job with a wondering whoop; and one of them added to the exclamation the following curious enquiry — "I say, Bill Ticket, when did you cut your teeth?"

"It's plain," thought Job, "the clothes belong to one Ticket." Job paused — he had surely seen the men before; and yet they passed so rapidly, that — ·it then Job was not aware that, possibly they were

going to see a swimming-match — a very private meeting — between a young Oxonian and the Dolphin. We know not that such was really their destination — we can only speak to the match.

As the suit worn by Job had a local reputation, he saw, with unaffected pleasure, a returned post-chaise halt when near him, and heard the postilion ask his honour "if he'd ride?" Job entered the chaise, pulled down the curtains, and went whirling off to the next town, a distance of ten miles. At least twenty times, in the solitude of his carriage, Job pulled out his purse, and counted his money.

The postilion had orders to stop outside the town: Job had business in a neighbouring village. There, he thought, he would calmly pass the day — it was yet early morning — and at nightfall travel towards London. Job had not breakfasted, and, as he crossed a bridge, the inn on the opposite side seemed to open its doors wider to receive him. At the instant he heard a shriek, and looking, saw a girl tearing her hair, and clapping her hands, and pointing to what seemed a mere ball in the water, though, on closer inspection, it appeared to Job a child's head. Job leapt into the stream, and swam in the direction of the child, whose neck was all but in the grasp of his preserver, when, for the last time, it sank. Job — the tailor had made his coat somewhat too tight under the arms — though an expert swimmer, was trammeled in his movements; he dived and he dived, as though in a well he was diving for truth, and still like many divers therein,

brought up nothing. Again he went down, and he rose with the body of Augustus Faddle, son and heir of Nicholas Faddle, Esq., proprietor of yonder splendid mansion, Ladybird Lodge — that mansion, with the lawn sweeping down to the water's edge.

CHAPTER VII.

"A PERFECT gentleman! the fineness of his linen declares that," exclaimed the laundress of Ladybird Lodge, talking of Job, at the time a distinguished tenant of the best bed-room of the house. "A perfect gentleman! you might draw his shirt through a wedding-ring!"

"I wonder if he's married," said an under-maid, looking at the footman.

"Swims like a duck," replied the inconsequential functionary.

"If Master Augustus had been drowned, what a shocking thing! And to-morrow, too, with such a dinner for his birthday!"

"Well, I suppose the gentleman will stay to dinner. I'm sure if he could eat gold, it isn't too good for him."

The above is a brief extract of a conversation, animatedly pursued in the servants' hall, on the philanthropic swimmer put to bed in the Blue Room — Nicholas Faddle, Esq., hovering about the providential visitor, with clasped hands, and all but streaming eyes, and now calling him the guardian angel of his race,

and now recommending another half fowl — (Job breakfasted in bed,) — and now insisting on a few more layers of hot blankets. It was in vain that Job again and again bulletined his convalescence; the grateful father insisted that, after so generous an action, he must be greatly exhausted. Then Mr. Faddle rang for more coffee and toast — then he rushed to the next room to clasp the little Augustus, preserved from a watery grave, and now pickled with hot salt — then he returned to Job, and vehemently declared that the doctor — the family doctor — must see him.

"A clever man — practice of two thousand a-year — an extraordinary man. Dr. Saffron — you have heard of Dr. Saffron?" Job had heard the name; but, we fear, doubted his skill, for he resolutely declared his determination not to see him. "If he had done anything to serve Mr. Faddle he was glad of it — but he had a mortal antipathy to all doctors."

"Well, well! Yet if you'd only let him feel your pulse, and show him your tongue." Job frowned, and bit his lip. "Enough — I wont press it; but if you should catch cold after saving my blessed child — where *are* the hot blankets?" And Faddle snatched at the bell with most benevolent fury; he then ran out, and Job finished his first fowl, and tenth cup of coffee. And still he ate, luxuriously pressing a bed of down, over-canopied with rose-coloured silk. At length, somewhat appeased, Job sat up in the bed, and was beginning to contemplate, when the too careful Faddle re-entered the room, bringing with him the infallible

Doctor Saffron. Instantaneously, Job dived into the cider, as though it was another stream, and another child sinking within it.

"Forgive me, I can't help it. My dear friend, do speak to the doctor — do" — Job maintained a dignified silence. "Well, then, only your pulse and your tongue. You may be ill and not know it — mayn't he, doctor?"

"Nothing more likely," said the wise Saffron.

"I ask no more — only your pulse and your tongue."

Job, finding there was no escape, ventured to put out his arm — Saffron pressed it, taking out his watch — Job felt a qualm as he heard the tick-tick of the repeater. "Humph!" said Saffron, releasing the limb; "if you please Sir, your tongue?"

Job now adroitly pulled his night-cap — a gorgeous family affair, with a most exuberant tassel — down to the tip of his nose; and drawing close up to his under lip the snowy sheet, he resignedly dropt his tongue upon it. With a keen imposing eye, Saffron pondered that most musical organ.

"Ha — furred" — he said — "much furred. Yes — the effect of the water."

Job said nothing; but he thought gin-and-water.

"Well, Sir," proceeded Saffron to the all but invisible Job, "we must have a few ounces of blood."

Job shook his head and drew his mouth into an eyelet hole.

"Now, do — pray, do let the doctor bleed you," and Faddle rang the bell. "Pray do — lives like yours, my dear kind Sir, are not — bid Nancy bring a basin — I say, lives like yours are not to be trifled with. Indeed," and Faddle spake with the most winning modulation of tone, "indeed, the doctor must bleed you."

Still Job shook his head, but the invincible Saffron stood with his ready weapon. "Some practitioners, Sir, would await the slow operation of aperients; but in cases such as these, I always attack the bowels with the lancet."

"To be sure," acquiesced Faddle, his own bowels being no party to the operation.

"This way, Nancy," said Saffron; and a serious-looking damsel, with a very handsome china bowl, a piece of Nankin worthy of the blood of Pippins, approached the bed. "Now, Sir, your arm, if you please — never been bled perhaps? 't is nothing — nothing I assure you — 't will not confine you — no you may get up to dinner."

"I should hope so," said Faddle; "and, doctor, you dine with us to-day, of course?"

It was with some anxiety, that Job awaited the answer of the man of life and death.

"And to-morrow — certainly," said Saffron.

A groan died in Job's throat, and with the resignation of a martyr he extended his arm. So long as the doctor remained in the house, so long Job felt he must be very ill, and keep his bed.

"Beautiful — beautiful," cried the encouraging and self-complacent Saffron, as Job's blood fell like a rivulet into the basin, Nancy becoming whiter with every drop. "Beautiful," and Saffron looked as a miser would look at molten gold. "There is nothing like bleeding, Mr. Faddle — only last night Sir Scipio Mannikin was saved by it — pray keep your arm still, Sir — yes, Sir Scipio should raise a tablet to the lancet."

"Razor," thought Job.

"Sir Scipio!" cried Faddle, "he 's Augustus's godfather — he dines with me to-morrow."

"No shivers, I hope?" kindly inquired Saffron of the patient, seeing the bed begin to shake under him. "No shivers?" Job pursed his mouth into a negative, and continued to shake.

"It 's impossible he should come," said Saffron, "though he 's out of danger, thanks — thanks to a providential accident that threw me near him in the hour of peril. Steady, Nancy. Apoplexy.

"And, of course," asked Faddle, "you bled him?"

"Of course he was bled," responded Saffron.

"Any more news of *that* affair?" questioned Faddle in a low significant tone.

"What, the — the barber?" and Saffron leered and gave a shrug.

"For myself," said the liberal Faddle, "I don't believe the scandalous rumours of wicked people. I think her ladyship, though merely the daughter of respectable people, and married from a third-rate board-

ing school, I think her incapable of — by the way, doctor, what sort of fellow is this Pippins?"

"You never saw him? Oh, — a — a —"

"Good looking, I hear?"

"Why, women have odd tastes, Mr. Faddle. I don't see much beauty in a narrow sloping forehead, high cheek bones, freckled skin, a nose stolen from a pug, and eyes that belong to a fish. How do you feel now, Sir?" asked the doctor of Job.

Job set his teeth, and with some difficulty at self-command, nodded his head.

"I knew you'd be better. As I say, happily for the ugly, women have odd tastes. For my own part, and I trust I am as far above prejudice as any man — for my own part, I should be sorry to be upon a jury, with only the evidence of his looks."

"It's very odd — I hear a subscription has been raised for him?" said Faddle.

"Shouldn't wonder if the women give him a piece of plate — that is, if he be not hanged before 't is ready. For they're after him."

"Why, nothing new? — nothing? —"

"Oh, I don't know what hasn't been missed since he was last at the Hall — and only last evening — but by-and-bye you shall know the whole affair. All I say is this; I devoutly hope the scoundred will be hanged! How do you feel now, Sir?" gently enquired the doctor.

"How do you feel now?" softly sounded Faddle.

"Fainted — fainted!" cried Saffron: "water, Nancy — water — and that thick cap — away with it," and Saffron's own hand was stretched to grasp the tassel, and in another half second the face of Job would have lain bare before its libeller, had not the patient resolutely griped his head-dress, and shouted, "Better — much better — very well, indeed."

"I told you so," said the satisfied Saffron — "now, you see," he added with the look and tone of a triumphant demonstrator — "now, you see what bleeding is. Take away, Nancy," and Saffron bandaged the arm. Nancy bore away the blood, and was soon beset by the anxious servants. They seemed to gather around the bowl like spirits evoked by a German wizard. The under-butler shut his eyes, nodded, and said — "It's very plain — he's a gentleman born." In matters of blood, the wisest of heralds have had their blunders — let us not then ask too much of an under-butler. Return we to the patient.

"He had better keep his bed to-day?" asked Faddle, benevolently.

"Yes — to-day," sentenced Saffron.

"What may he take?"

"Let me see. Why, to-day, I should say he may take — a — whatever he likes."

"What! with the beginning of a fever?"

"My system," said the emphatic Saffron. "If what he eats does him no harm, 'tis plain he's better; if, on the other hand, it does him harm, to-morrow the

symptoms will be stronger, and we shall have the surer authority to go upon."

So saying, Dr. Saffron took his hat and cane, and returned to the convalescent Augustus.

Faddle crept closer to the patient. "My best friend — the preserver of my child, the saviour of my house — what would you like to take?"

Job replied, with a tremulous voice, "A glass of rum and water, hot, with sugar."

It was a fanciful wish for a feverish patient; but it was complied with to the letter — no, not to the letter. With the guest of Jonathan Bradford at the Oxford inn, Job Pippins

"— said not if a lemon he would like;"

but the under-butler, like the aforesaid provident Jonathan, in the simple language of the dramatic poet, —

"Brought one."

And now, draw the curtains, and tread softly, for Job is sleeping. At his earnest desire, he had had a private interview with Jacob Gorse, the man especially ordained to paddle Augustus in the boat, but whose wilful negligence had endangered the child's life, and lost to himself his place at Ladybird Lodge. Job, we say, talked to Jacob ere he was thrust from the door. What he said to him here matters not; doubtless he gave him some golden rule for his future days — some amulet to wear at his breast — some phylactery to bind around his brow. Job slept; he slept in down;

and he who but in the morning was shirtless, and "couldn't help it," was now guarded as the eye and heart of a princely house — a jewel — a talisman — a wonder-worker; nor "could he help it."

Had he dived in his half-shirt, would he have slept in the Blue Room?

CHAPTER VIII.

THE next morning all was animation in and about Ladybird Lodge. The birth-day of Augustus was to be solemnised with unusual splendour. At an early hour, Faddle, the grateful father, was at the bed-side of Job, who declared himself unable to join the dinner-party, at which, next to the epergne presented to the host for his breed of bulls, Job was expected to be the principal attraction.

"And was ever anything so unfortunate? Dr. Saffron can't see you: he has been up all night with Lady Gemini, and doesn't, he writes, expect to get away before to-morrow. He can't come."

"Do you know, I think I 'll try to join you." Faddle pressed the hands of Job between his own. "Yes, I — I think I shall be well enough; but — but" —

"Very true; your wardrobe" —

"Quite spoilt — impossible that I can wear anything again."

"Of course, of course. Let me see — will you pardon what I am about to say? I have a suit; I 'm

sure 't will fit you — 't was made for me. I never wore it but once — when I was sheriff, and took an address to court. I may say it — a handsome thing; a chocolate cut velvet, with flowers down the skirts, and nosegays embroidered at the pocket-holes; — breeches to match — and white satin waistcoat, flourished with gold. I 'm sure they 'll fit you — ha! I was much thinner then — sure they 'll fit you."

Faddle, exalted with the project, ran from the chamber in pursuit of his plan.

We pass the process of the toilet. Enough for the reader, if we present him to Job Pippins — otherwise, John Jewel, Esq., arrayed in the very court-suit of the ex-sheriff of the county — a suit originally purchased in the vain expectation of knighthood. Whatever may have been the suspicions of the frank and over-flowing Faddle, the portrait drawn of Pippins by the hand of Saffron made the masquerade perfectly secure; for Job looked and moved a new-made count. Had not the dinner-bell summoned him away, Job had pined, a new Narcissus, at the mirror. But the truth is, he was a remarkably pretty fellow — a truth published by the general stir and simper of a bevy of ladies, gathered to do honour to the natal day of Augustus, and, incidentally, to reward, with gentle words and sweetest smiles, his happy life-preserver. Job wore his arm in a sling — an additional and touching claim to the sensibilities of the women. As he entered the room, and cast his eyes bashfully around him, there was in his face a look of confusion, which, though it might

with some take from his breeding, with others it added considerably to his merit. A cynical male guest whispered to his companion — "The fellow is looking round for applause." Perish all such ill-nature like a pestilent weed! When Job looked round, he look timidly for Doctor Saffron.

Job had suffered, as he thought, the whole round of introduction, when Faddle brought him to a young fellow, who, for limb and figure, might have passed for Job's twin-brother.

"My dear Mr. Jewel, I must make my friend Frank Triton know you: your tastes, your accomplishments, must, I am sure, most closely ally you."

Job and Frank mutually bowed, when Faddle, in a sort of trumpet-whisper, audible throughout the room, applied his mouth to Job's ear —

"Splendid fellow! he 's almost beat the Dolphin."

Job bowed still lower to the possible conqueror of such an adversary.

"Beat the Dolphin; but — by-and-bye" — And Faddle significantly lifted up his fore-finger, and smothered a chuckle, sliding off to an unexpected guest, introduced by Frank.

"Mr. Jewel, Mr. Wigmore."

Mr. Wigmore raised his broad back a hair's-breadth from the mantel-piece, and having "thrown his head" at Job, returned to his easy position. He was certainly less polished in his look and manner than any

of the company, and yet Job felt less at ease before him. The women — bless them! — fluttered around Job, and still his bravery was the theme of their silver tongues. For the ten thousandth time, Mrs. Faddle, as a mother, thanked him; and then grandmothers, aunts, cousins, all put in their peculiar claims to thank him in their various capacities. Then came enquiries touching his health. How was his head — how was his arm — how was his fever? To all such queries, Job, considering the shortness of the notice, replied very gracefully —

"Quite well, I thank you." At last, by the number of questions confused and bewildered, Job, without knowing when he answered, or to whom he replied, bowed mechanically, and still said —

"Quite well, I thank you."

A dead silence for a second ensued, and Job found himself in front of Mr. Wigmore.

"How's your gums, Sir?"

"Quite well, I thank you."

General attention was drawn upon Mr. Wigmore, who, insensible as a target, received the eyes of the company. A titter crept through the room, and some of the men laughed outright.

"It was only yesterday a fellow asked about my teeth," thought Job. And he looked timidly in the dead-wall face of Wigmore. It was an anxious moment for Job, when, happily for him, the servant arrived, and Mrs. Faddle was led to her chair by Job Pippins John Jewel, Esq.

The dinner began with more than ordinary gravity. That great event of every twenty-four hours received, on the present occasion, its more than legitimate attention at Ladybird Lodge. Job acquitted himself with praiseworthy elegance and heartiness, and whilst one fair feeder whispered of his grace, Mr. Wigmore loudly complimented him on his appetite. Faddle, and not for the first time, wondered why Frank had brought his friend. But Job, it must be owned, was all watchful politeness; and he had his reward. Dr. Lullaby, an exemplary clergyman of eighteen stone, sat near the turtle. Thrice the doctor had been helped, and still he sat with one eye slumbering on the last ladlefull. Often he wished to ask, and as often repressed the ignoble weakness. Job saw the internal struggle. Again the doctor turned to gaze — sighed — and was about to turn away his head for ever, when Job, with the dexterous hand of a juggler, seized the ladle, and ere the doctor could wink, its contents lay melting in his plate. The doctor's face was radiant with pleasure; and thrusting his right hand under the table, he clawed hold of the hand of Job, and squeezing it until the knuckles cracked like walnuts, he cried in a subdued voice, spasmodic with delight, shaking on the last word — "That's — that's — friendly!"

Nothing of further import occurred until a splendid turbot mutely put in its claims for applause. They were briefly acknowledged by the doctor. — "This fish, Mr. Faddle, was caught in a silver net."

"I think it is the finest fish that swims," rashly observed Frank Triton.

"What! better than the Dolphin?" asked Faddle, with the thrust of a gladiator.

"Ha! ha! ha!" roared Wigmore; and a timid lady, only six months a widow, jumped in her chair, as in a menagerie a lady may jump unconsciously too near the bars.

"What *is* this about the Dolphin?" asked Mrs. Faddle, with the eyes of wondering innocence. Faddle gave a sidelong look at Triton, who returned an expostulatory glance, and Mrs. Faddle sat unanswered.

"Do you know, Sir," — and Wigmore, in thorough bass, addressed Pippins — "do you know, Sir, how they are going on with the pearl fishery?"

"Not the slightest notion," said Pippins, with newborn dignity.

"It must be a very hazardous employment for the poor men," remarked the widow.

"Not at all," said Triton — "not at all — for they only employ such as are predestined the other way."

"Is that true, Sir?" said Wigmore to Job, appealing to him as a first authority.

"I should think the fishery doesn't employ all such," said Job, blindly aiming at what he thought might prove a hit. Faddle rubbed his hands; the doctor hemmed, and Wigmore, for a second, wrinkled his brow.

"For my part," said the widow, with a recollection of youth, "I prefer pearls to diamonds."

"Which would you take, Sir?" said Job, becoming in his turn assailant, to Wigmore.

"Oh, I should certainly take," replied Wigmore, smiling a grim gallantry, "whatever the lady took."

"Then I say, pearls," concluded the widow.

"Pearls," decided Wigmore: and again he put a smile into his face that would have dissolved Cleopatra's union. Then turning round to Pippins, he bluntly asked — "What do you think of coral, Sir?"

"Really, Wigmore," interposed Triton, feeling tender for his own reputation, "you catechise Mr. Jewel as though he were a merman."

"Very right — very right, Frank. Pearls and diamonds! — he has saved the richest pearl for me, and all I say is, — and what I expect my friends to say is, — God bless him!" — and something of the father stole into Faddle's eye, and his wife looked with all her heart in her face as she turned to Job.

"Ha! you should have seen Mr. Jewel. I'm told he dived, and dived like — like" —

"Like a Dolphin," said a young fellow, wickedly supplying the simile. Again the men shouted, and the women wondered — and Faddle, looking with a laughing desperation at Triton, cried —

"I 'm blest if I don't tell it." Triton after many unsuccessful appeals, resigned himself into the hands of Faddle. "You have heard of the man we call the

Dolphin — I beg your pardon, Mr. Jewel, you 're a stranger — well, we have a fellow here, who, I really think could swim against a whale. However, my friend Frank thought himself a match for him, and — ha! ha! — yesterday morning, it was agreed that nobody should know it, and with only one for an umpire, the match was to be decided: Well, though Frank was only next to the Dolphin himself, he hadn't a chance; and so he was about to return to his mother earth, when he found that the water nymphs — the pretty river-goddesses with their 'pearled wrists,' as Mr. Milton says, I remember — conspired to 'take him in.' And how do you think they managed? Why, they had stolen his clothes." The gentlemen shouted again at this reduction of Frank to a state of innocence, but the women, by their staid looks, clearly thought it no joke. By the way, Pippins indulged in no unseemly merriment.

"True, Mr. Jewel, true — in other words, some hang-dog thief had run away with them." Job's jaw fell like the jaw of a dead man, and he sat as upon one entire and perfect blister.

"They hadn't left him — ha! ha! ha! — they" — and here Faddle, with praiseworthy prudence, put the edge of his hand to one side of his mouth that the intelligence might reach Job's private ear alone — "they hadn't left him even a shirt" — Job's teeth chattered — "no not even half a shirt." Job

"Thought of the murders of a five-barred gate,"

and the table, and the guests spun round, and he distinguished no face, save the face of Wigmore looking sternly at him.

"Ar'n't you well?" cried Mrs. Faddle, and there was a general move towards Job.

"It's my fault! I would make him come down. Is it your head, Mr. Jewel?" said Faddle.

"Is it your arm?" compassionately asked the widow.

"Is it," asked Wigmore, we mean Captain Skinks — for it was he, indeed — "is it your teeth?" And as he put the question, his fingers played with the chain of Sir Scipio's repeater.

"Thank goodness!" and Mrs. Faddle pointed to the object without — "Thank goodness! here's Doctor Saffron on his horse!"

"My bed — my bed!" roared Job, and he leapt up, and actually fought his way through the guests — gained his room — and bounced between the sheets.

Dr. Saffron lost no time, but immediately followed Mr. Jewel. Again the doctor had his finger on Job's pulse — and again Job wore his nightcap down.

"Humph! I think — I" —

CHAPTER IX.

"I THINK — I think," repeated Doctor Saffron, his fingers still upon Job's pulse, — "I think it was very fortunate I came." Now, whatever Job thought, he said nothing. Saffron rose from his seat, stroked his chin, thrust his hands in his pockets, and pronounced sentence — "A little more blood."

"I thought so," said Faddle, and beneficently smiling, he added — "Nancy, a basin."

"Some sixteen ounces, and a blister on the chest," said Saffron. "Yes, that will do for to-night."

"His dinner couldn't have hurt him; he was only helped three times to haunch," said Faddle, piteously.

"Well, I promise you," protested Saffron with more than professional earnestness, "if he isn't much better to-morrow, I 'll shave his head." Faddle pressed the doctor's hand in token of thanksgiving. "You have pigeons at hand, I hope?"

"You know we 're very fond of 'em, doctor. But you can tell best — would they quite agree with his stomach?"

"Stomach pooh — soles of his feet. If we don't take great care," and Saffron lowered his voice to a most confidential tone, "if we don't take great care, this may be a case for Doctor Lullaby." Faddle winced — "I tell you, there is no time to be lost." At this moment Nancy made her appearance with a riband and the fatal china bowl. Again Saffron stood

ready with his lancet, again he was about to approach the sufferer, when he was chained to the spot by the loud snores of the patient. "Bless me! he's asleep," cried Faddle, and again Job snored in corroboration; the very curtain rings vibrated with the sound. "You'll never wake him?" asked Faddle, as Saffron laid his hands upon the bed clothes; "won't sleep do him good, doctor?"

"Quite cure him," replied Saffron, with a sarcastic smile. "Six hours of such sleep, and he'll want none of my help." And Job snored with greater vehemence. "Don't be deceived by that," said the doctor to the host, "I 've heard many a patient do that, and, I give you my honour, with all my care, it has turned into the sleep of death."

"Well, I thought sleep must be a very balm," said the superficial Faddle.

"And so it is," sharply returned the doctor, "but in some cases balm is the deadliest poison: this is one of them. Sir — Sir," and the doctor shouted to Job, when a gentle knock was heard at the door. The footman, with a fine respect for the sick man's chamber, only edged in his cheek, and in the softest voice begged to ask whether the doctor would be able to attend the dinner-table, or whether a cover should be put aside for him?

Saffron, absorbed by his professional duties, apparently gave no ear to the mission; but pausing near his patient, who continued at a short notice to perform wonders, for every snore was an improvement in body

and tone on its predecessor, — the doctor's face bent into a smile, and he resorted to his snuff-box, and observed — "Ha! well — that is better — yes, much better. What did you say?" and he turned to the still lingering footman, who repeated the question.

"I think, friend Faddle, we may venture to leave him for a few minutes? — but, hark ye, Nancy, let me be called, if there's the slightest alteration." Still Job snored, and still the doctor, until beyond ear-shot, applauded every note with — "that's well — better — better — better."

When the doctor appeared in the drawing-room, every voice — save the *ferrea vox* of Skinks, alias Wigmore — cried for news of the patient. Saffron answered in general terms, which, translated into particular replies, assured the enquirers, that if Mr. Jewel recovered, he would no doubt live; — if his disease proved mortal, there was as little doubt he would die: and that these were most learned deductions was evident from the fact that everybody seemed perfectly satisfied with them.

In a very, very brief time the patient of the Blue Room was well-nigh forgotten by at least nineteen out of twenty of the guests, Doctor Saffron almost included. And yet, there was one — one who thought of Job — one whose appetite had been struck dead at the tenth mouthful at what the doctor called his dangerous relapse. The fair widow — none of your silly spinsters with hearts like green oranges — had a heart, soft and ripe as a medlar. Whether from having lived

with, and buried, a husband thirty years older than herself, she had become a deeper thinker — had acquired a keener vision into the soul of things than many of her evenly-paired acquaintance, we know not enough of young widows to decide: but of this we are certain; she had, from first, appreciated the merits of Job at their golden value. Five feet ten inches — a handsome face — apparent good temper, and, despite the doctor sound constitution, were not lost upon a woman of her experience. "She was not a maudlin girl," as her own maid ingenuously avowed, "to give herself red eyes for a bread-and butter face and curly hair." With the widow, the whiskers of Mars were of greater worth than the locks of Adonis.

The business of the table proceeded in all its tumult, when the widow, seated next to Doctor Saffron — he had attended her poor husband in his last illness, and she felt a great confidence in him — ventured to put a list of queries touching the sufferer, as she tenderly thought him, up stairs. The doctor was a man of system, and cared not to have his patients laid upon the dinner-table. Moreover, in the present instance, he was ferociously hungry; having been well-nigh worn out in his late attendance on Lady Gemini — whose medicine, by the way, at that moment haunted him.

"And, my dear doctor, going on well, you say?"

Turning the drum-stick of a goose in his mouth, he replied — "Well as can be expected;" never

taking into account the extraordinary expectations of some people.

"You think there's nothing serious in the case?"

"Serious! no — not at all. I 've — with great pleasure" — and Saffron honoured a challenge to wine — "I 've sent for a nurse," and again he filled his mouth with goose.

"A nurse!" cried the widow, "so bad as that?"

"Your dear friend, Lady Gemini — hasn't Mr. Faddle told you? At last, a charming little boy."

"Very true — I never was so delighted to hear any thing. But the preserver of our little boy?"

"He 's — he 's in bed;" and Saffron, becoming restless under the examination, turned from the widow and rolled his eyes up and down the table. At last they lighted upon a huge turkey.

"And — and dear doctor, what may be his complaint?"

"The breast," said Saffron to the carver of the bird.

There was a brief pause — the doctor's plate was filled — a delicious collop was on the doctor's fork — the fork near his mouth — his mouth gaping, when, with a long-drawn sigh, down fell the head of the widow on the doctor's shoulder. There was a general stir at the table — a general cry of "fainted!" A magistrate chewing his meat, authoritatively pronounced — "decidedly fainted." Wigmore instantly carried the widow from the room, followed by the hostess and another female friend, who relentlessly

urged the doctor from his plate. In a moment of desperate disappointment, Saffron could have thrown up his diploma, so that he might have executed his dinner.

"Was ever anything so unlucky!" said the host. "First that Mr. Jewel should be ill, and then that Mrs." —

"Sympathy," said Triton, with a wink of wickedness. "Sympathy."

"Don't, Frank," cried a dear female friend of the widow, benevolently strangling a laugh. "Don't." But we are forgetting what is due to the new patient.

"We had better get her to bed," said the doctor, with the down look of an injured man.

"The Cane Room," said Mrs. Faddle, and one of the servants led the way. Wigmore ran up stairs with his hysterical burden, and Saffron, with funereal gait and aspect, followed. Wigmore, having surrendered the widow to the doctor and the women, was proceeding to join the company, when, about to pass the door of the adjoining chamber, he recognised the voice of the male patient, at first he thought loudly laughing, but his head yet rang with the hysterics of the widow, and his ear was not sufficiently fine to distinguish the sex of a note. However, once at the door of the sick man, it would have been unkind to pass it; therefore, turning the handle, Wigmore thrust his skull into the room, and, grinning like a shark, asked "If Mr. Ticket was any better?" Nancy was about to speak. "Say Wigmore — Captain Wigmore

— called to ask;" and then, with a departing kindness, that quite puzzled the girl — "take care of his teeth."

"Ticket and teeth?" said Nancy, "what can he mean, Sir?"

"What can he mean?" cried Job to himself, and again an ague fit came on. In a few minutes another knock at the door, and Bodkin, the widow's maid, entered flutteringly, fairly sweeping the ground with curtsies. She begged very many thousand pardons, but would Nancy go to her mistress — the doctor was about to bleed her — and for herself, she loved her so much she could not hold the basin? If the gentleman didn't mind she would stay, in case he might want any thing. Job raised his eye above the counterpane and nodded assent. Exit Nancy.

"And what," asked Job, in a feeble voice, well worthy of cultivation for a representative of the sick, "And what may ail your charming mistress?"

"I can't tell, Sir — the doctor says her complaint is just the same as yours."

"And what is that?" said Job to himself in great perplexity.

"And I think he called it sym — sympathy. But whatever it is, he says bleeding is the only cure for it. He has bled you, Sir" —

"Damn him!" said Job.

"And he 'll bleed my mistress."

Job said nothing.

"Yes, Sir — he said you are both to be treated

just alike. He has written home for blisters for two. I hope, Sir, you won't let him shave your head — pray don't, Sir."

"And why not?" asked Job, touched by the interest the woman seemed to take in him. "Why not?"

"Because my mistress has such beautiful hair, and as you 're both to be treated alike — Oh, Sir! you should see it out of that filthy cap; for my part I wouldn't wear a widow's cap to please the best dead man that ever was buried. I" —

Bodkin was arrested in her eloquence by the return of Nancy, who told her she was wanted in the next room. Bodkin, with a mysterious glance at Job, heaved a deep sigh, exclaimed, "My poor mistress!" and departed.

"In the next room!" thought Job; and he fell off into a brown study, which held him tongue-tied for many minutes. When next he spoke, he asked, quite unconscious of the syllables, "Nancy, is she rich?"

"Very comfortable they say, Sir."

"In the next room!" again thought Job, "and to be treated both alike!" And the widow's face, despite the dead man's cap, glowed prettily between the curtains.

CHAPTER X.

For three whole days — three anxious nights — were Job and the widow next room neighbours. Their feelings, toned, as the doctor avowed, and as they themselves firmly believed, by the same sickness, sweetly harmonised. They could hear each other cough, and conscious of such advantage, that usually unmusical operation, sublimed by the tender passion, became almost dulcet. Great things have been done upon the Jew's-harp, but they are as nothing to the cough of our widow. Ere the second day was closed, so assiduously had she practised, so frequently had she changed and modulated the note — now coughing *affettuoso*, now *con espressione*, now *allegretto*, and now *fortissimo* — that she was the very nightingale of a cold.

The listening heart of truant Whittington, gave the words it wished to bells. A spirit came through the dewy air of evening — a spirit speaking golden promise — a visible advent of the great future — touched the brain of the little tatterdemalion of Holloway — clapped his little hand, and made his truant feet tread the green meads back to fortune and to London. "Turn again, Whittington!" Thus rang the bells. — "Write, Job Pippins!" Thus coughed the widow.

Job wrote —

"*Blue Room, Ladybird Lodge.*

"Mr. Jewel would feel great happiness at knowing how Mrs. Candy passed the night. Mr. J. has been

much concerned at her cough — fears it is very troublesome to her. Can nothing be done to relieve it?"

"*Cane Room, Ladybird Lodge.*

"Mrs. Candy returns her best compliments to Mr. Jewel, and earnestly hopes that he has passed a better night. Has been much interested in his cold — fears that the rookery is too near the Blue Room for a delicate patient. Begs to assure Mr. Jewel that there is no danger in her little cough — she has it every spring. Hopes it has not disturbed the rest of Mr. J."

"*Blue Room, Ladybird Lodge.*

"DEAR MADAM, — Although I listened all night, I was agreeably disappointed at not hearing you above three times — may I therefore hope on your part for a most refreshing sleep, with a considerable abatement of cough? I fear that those nasty sparrows were up too early for you this morning. I trust, however, that your complaint has not suffered from their noise.

"Yours, most truly, dear Madam,

"JOHN JEWEL.

"P.S. If you have taken all your medicine, mine is not quite out. Need I say it is at your service?"

"*Cane Room, Ladybird Lodge.*

"DEAR SIR, — Your anxiety flatters and distresses me. I would deny the fact — but I have ever been the worshipper of truth. Not once did I close

my eyes last night. In happier days, I slept like the lady in the fairy tale. But there are afflictions, there are losses — and since my late bereavement — but let me pass the theme! — I have done.

"I did not sleep — but there were stars in heaven, Sir — and there was the vestal brightness of the soft, full moon — and the nightingale was singing in the wood — and the little airs were creeping about my window-panes — and the leaves were tapping at the glass — and there are associations of youth — childhood, I would say — and there are feelings — I mean sentiments — touching emotions, which the bounteousness of nature — oh, Mr. Jewel! — what would this world be without sympathy!

"AGNES CANDY.

"P.S. Could you spare a powder?"

"*Blue Room, Ladybird Lodge.*

"MY DEAREST MADAM, — My heart is torn to inform you that I have no powder left. But I have sent to Mr. Faddle, and horse and man are by this time gone.

"And you were awake all night, — and — odd circumstance — so was I! And I was looking at the stars, and thinking whether love was there! And I was gazing at the moon, round and bright as a new wedding-ring! And your name is Agnes! Oh, Madam, did you ever see the *Bleeding Nun?* If you have, then, have you seen a wounded heart — but I'll say no more. And yet, what a fool was *Raymond* to run away

with a ghost! Should not *I* — I say, should not *I* have known my own, own Agnes?

"Thine ever, my dearest Madam,

"JOHN JEWEL.

"P. S. I have now nothing left but one little bottle."

"*Cane Room, Ladybird Lodge.*

"DEAR MR. JEWEL, — Your criticism on the drama does honour alike to your judgment and your feelings. The improbability, so lucidly developed by your own instinctive goodness, has, I own, often struck me; but never so fully as now, touched by your diamond of a pen. Oh, Sir! why will you not condescend to write for the stage? A task so easy — and the reward so great! For the sake of the expiring drama, *do* forget you are a gentleman, and write a play.

"You spoke of *Raymond* deceived by a shadow. Alas! hath not many an *Agnes* been alike betrayed? How many an elopement — how many a stolen match — but whither am I wandering?

"I hear that you are about to quit your room. I am rejoiced at your convalescence. How delightful — as the old gentleman in *The Stranger* more than insinuates — to feel well after being ill! To breathe the fresh air — to move again among rural objects — to sit in the dusk of evening — such an evening as this day promises — in a jessamine bower — such a bower as that at the end of the second garden to the right of

the acacia, as you enter by the little gate through the private arbutus grove — I say, how delightful in such an evening, and in such a place, to inhale the fragrance of the jessamine's creamy blossom — to sit and talk of our hopes in the next world, and our pleasures in this! Oh, Sir!

"Farewell, yours truly,
"AGNES CANDY."

We do not intend to criticise this correspondence; we merely vouch for the letters as true copies. That the widow should promise jessamine blossom in April, we put down to the unthinking liberality of the generous sex. For is it not in the power of woman to make even the dead twigs of life bud? — to give to very stinging nettles the form and fragrance of delicious hyacinths?

There are to our mind few letters so interesting from their origin, from the place, feelings, and sentiments which begot them, as these missives, written with only a thin partition between the writers. A matter-of-fact lover would have thought of a gimblet.

Job lay in a sweet pensiveness in bed, the last letter of the widow between his finger and thumb — when Faddle tapped at the door. "Better? — oh, yes — much better" — cried that soul of hospitality, glowing benevolently at Job, who received the news with a smile of interesting languor. "And the widow — she vows she 'll leave her room to-day!" Job felt the blood in his cheek, and crumpled the letter under

the clothes. "He! he! Saffron's given ye both up!"

Job's lips moved, and we think he said — "Thank heaven!"

"He swore there was no making ye better or worse. He! he! Medicine was thrown away upon ye. Oh! I had almost forgotten — your trunk is come."

"Trunk!" echoed Job, forgetting in the moment that he had spoken of a small, but handsome wardrobe, left at a distant inn, to be forwarded to him, whenever he should write for it — he pursuing a rambling tour throughout the country, led onward by its objects of the picturesque. And yet, had Faddle certified to Job that his "elephant, harnessed and mounted, was at the door," Job had not been more astounded than at the announcement of his trunk. Were the fairies back again?

"A young man left it. Nancy, let John bring it up. Ha! ha! widow," and Faddle tapped playfully at the wall, in answer to a light feminine laugh from the next apartment. The laugh was repeated. "Ha! ha! my lady," responded Faddle; and then looking archly at Job, sagaciously said — "You can't tell me who's in the next room?"

"My trunk!" cried the rapt Job.

"Ha! ha! my lady — oh, here is the box;" and the servant put down a square wooden repository, very like one of those precious coffers made for precious wigs.

"Trunk," repeated Job, eyeing the box as if it contained a lighted bomb-shell.

"Your name, however," said Faddle, reading in sonorous tones the direction on the lid — "*John Jewel, Esq.!* — Ha! you are right — very right," commended Faddle, contemplating the limited dimensions of the box — "never take a tour of pleasure with much luggage. A clean shirt, and a change — quite enough. I suppose, now, you have some of your sketches there?"

Job tried to speak, but could only effect a ghastly smile, which Faddle liberally translated into the affirmative.

"I must see them — where's the key?" and, at the same moment, impatiently placing his fingers to the lid, it yielded to the action. "Unlocked!" exclaimed Faddle, and the lid stood up. "Why, Mr. Jewel — humph — eh — ha, ha! — why, what is this? Sketches? Ha! ha!"

Job dissolved into a cold jelly, and the roots of his hair turned to ice, as Faddle, with a fine homage to art, carefully removed a pen-and-ink drawing from the inside of the lid, and held it in a light most favourable to its beauties. The connoisseur beheld, scratched with bold, though rugged touches on the back of a printed dying speech — (the valedictory oration of a celebrated sheep-stealer) — a gallows; the perpendicular and horizontal beams fancifully constructed of two baby corals, and the figure of a man,

with that mortal inclination of the muffled head, depending therefrom.

"An odd subject — a very odd subject," exclaimed Faddle, "and what is this written underneath? — oh! I see," and Faddle, his eyes growing bigger, read with a tone of wonder, "*That 's the Ticket!* Well, Mr. Jewel, I — ha! ha! I can't for the life of me compliment you on the taste of your design, but" and Faddle gave a look that heralded a joke, "but your execution is perfect."

Job grinned from ear to ear with ill-suppressed horror. He tried to speak, but not a word would come. He lay in silent agony — fairly nailed by terror to the bed — watching the looks and hands of the interested Faddle, who, his curiosity conquering his good manners rapidly twitched up the few articles of dress tumbled into the box. The freedom of Faddle, may, to be sure, admit of this excuse! had the garments been of velvet and brocade, he had not rudely laid his hand upon them; but openly displaying their coarse web and vulgar cut, they were at a thought plucked forth, and thrown about at pleasure.

"*Your* wardrobe, Mr. Jewel? *yours?*" cried Faddle, holding a doublet between his fingers, and his face wrinkling into a thousand lines of fear and doubt, as though he held a serpent by the tail, — "*yours?*"

Faddle waited for an answer, but Job was struck dumb by the mysterious apparition of his own breeches!

Yes; the box directed to "John Jewel, Esq.," contained the whole of the wardrobe, *minus* the shirt, of Job Pippins. Job raised himself upon his elbow, and with a peculiarly pale cast of thought surveyed the remains — the slough of his baser days. His higher nature (he was in the blue bed in a fine cambric shirt, lace ruffled) looked down upon his sordid first life. In that moment, the purified intelligence contemplated the squalor "shuffled off." No wonder then that Job, looking at his late nether cloth, after some time doubted his identity.

"This is some shameful trick," cried Faddle; "some infamous hoax." Job smiled in acquiescence. "A stupid piece of would-be wit." Job shrugged up his shoulders in pity of the inventors. "But it shall be seen into." Job shook his head and blandly smiled a — no. "But it shall! That a guest of mine should — no, Mr. Jewel, no, — it shall" — A sudden thought, with a rush of blood to his face, came upon Faddle; slapping his thigh with great force and precision, he exclaimed, "If now, it should be" —

A slight tap at the door, and enter the hero of the river — Frank Triton. "How-d'ye-do, Jewel, how-d'ye-do?" asked the visitor, with that graceful freedom which distinguishes the truly well-bred. Job smiled faintly, and immediately there grew at his bed-side a clump of alders, and a bright river ran through his chamber. "How-d'ye-do, Sir?" and Frank offered his hand to Faddle, who gathered him-

self up, and at a short notice, looked as dignified as a leaden statue.

"Mr. Triton, as a gentleman, — and a man of honour," —

"Hallo!" cried Frank, evidently unused to such terms of conjuration on the part of the speaker — "Hallo! what the devil now?"

Faddle remained stern to his purpose. "Mr. Triton, as a gentleman, and a man of honour, do you know anything about this?" and inclining his fore-finger towards the box, Faddle looked the spirit of interrogation.

"About what?" cried Triton with a tongue of brass.

"About this, Sir — and this — and this — and this?" and Faddle pointed to the various articles of dress, the *exuviæ*, of Pippins scattered on the floor: and as he compelled the eye of the questioned to jerkin, vest, and doublet, it was plain from the shifting expression of the beholder, that he was not wholly guiltless. Frank tried the first resource of detected crime; he essayed a laugh relentlessly nipped in the bud by Faddle. "No, Sir, no, this is a serious matter; I look upon myself as insulted, and again I ask you if you know anything of these clothes?"

Triton hung down his head, and subduing a laugh, and then biting his lip, with a look of confusion, turned over the vestments with his cane.

"Enough, Sir — quite enough: I see the joke — and a very poor one it is — belongs to you. How Mr. Jewel may receive it, I know not. Nay, Sir, no denial. Now I recollect — there was nobody but yourself and your new friend Mr. Wigmore present," — (at the name of Wigmore it was observable that Frank switched his cane) — "when I spoke of Mr. Jewel's wardrobe; and I repeat, how he, as a man of delicate honour, may consider this affront, Sir, I" —

Here the attention of the speaker was turned towards the bed where Job lay with a slate-coloured face, and his teeth rattling like dice. Whether it was fear, or conscience, that touched him, we will not enquire; Mr. Faddle liberally translated the emotion into indignant rage. "Of course, any gentleman so put upon, would be in a fury." And then the host, his softer nature returning to him, began to play the part of peace-maker. "It was wrong; it was very stupid of Frank — but he was a wit, and wits were very foolish people — and Frank, if he would but leave off his wit, would be a very fine fellow, and so Mr. Jewel would pardon the jest, and think no more of the rags sent in the box?" Job strove to make an answer, but still he lay dumb and bewildered.

"Come, come, forget and forgive. Now promise me, my dear Jewel, you 'll think no more of the trumpery; will you, now?"

"I 'll — I 'll try to forget it;" magnanimously answered Job.

"That's right; the brave are always generous; and the man who would jump into a river" —

Job looked piteously at Faddle — "Well, well, I 'll say no more of that; but you 'll shake Frank's hand — yes, you 'll shake his hand?" Job had some conscience, and still kept his hand in bed. "Come, I must have your hands upon it — I say I must;" and Faddle with a powerful philanthropy, pulled the hand of Job from beneath the sheets, and fixing it in the hand of Frank, bound the two in his own, and kept shaking them to make their friendship mingle.

"Now, now, I 'm happy;" and Faddle walked from the room, confident that he had planted the olive; and pondering on the courage and generosity of Job, who was at once a hero and a sage, and "couldn't help it."

Job, left alone with Frank Triton, was about to launch into general topics — when Frank put to him the following question — "Pray, Sir, can you tell me anything of Mr. Wigmore?"

One moment before, Job was for turning upon his side, when the query, significantly put, kept him on his back. No beetle with a corking-pin through its bowels was ever more cruelly fixed. Job groaned.

CHAPTER XI.

"PRAY, Sir, can you tell me anything of Mr. Wigmore?" Frank, with cold ferocity, repeated the question.

Job felt the whites of his eyes turn yellow, as he replied — "No, Sir."

"Very odd. I thought he recognised you at your meeting?"

"No, Sir," repeated Job, with some improvement of tone.

"Why, I thought he alluded to an old complaint of yours. Didn't he speak of a — a toothache?"

"Never saw him in my life till I saw him down stairs," said Job, with growing confidence; and what was more, with truth; for it will be remembered that when the great captain entered the hut, Job was sleeping in the arms of spirituous liquor.

"He has something the air of a — a gentleman," said Triton, doubtingly. Job was silent. "And yet, yet —" continued Triton, after a pause — "yet, it 's very odd."

"I thought he was an old friend," remarked Job; becoming interested by the manner of his visitor, and really anxious on his own account to know something of the mysterious Wigmore. "An old and valued friend?"

"Only an acquaintance of a few hours. I 'll tell you, Mr. Jewel, how it was. You have heard of the

affair of the swimming match?" Job tremblingly nodded an affirmative. "Returning to dress, I found some scoundrel had stolen my clothes. Without a rag — a stitch — you can easily suppose the perplexing delicacy of my situation." Job could. "At the very moment of my destitution, who should saunter to the bank but Mr. Wigmore. He professed the deepest sympathy for my loss; with the most benevolent zeal, ran to a neighbouring hut, and in a few minutes returned with the very garments you see before you, borrowed from the wife of a cottager."

"Indeed?" said Job, looking at his old familiar dress with the eyes of a stranger. "Indeed?"

"So he said; but the fact is, Jewel, one doesn't like to own one's self tricked; and, in the first place the hang-dog who stole my coat stole my purse with it. You are the first to whom I have owned so much, and" — here Frank confidently laid his hand upon the hand of Job — "and pray let it go no further."

"Nobody shall know it from me," stoutly promised Job.

"However, I don't so much care for the fellow who took my purse; he 'll meet with his reward — yes, I already see the knot under *his* ear." Job instinctively clapped his hand to his jugular. "What 's the matter, Jewel?"

"Weakness — only weakness," said the dizzy Pippins. "And — and — he — Wigmore borrowed those clothes from a cottager?"

"So he said; but, between ourselves, I hardly know if they didn't come from the bones of Jack-of-the-Gibbet. Look at 'em, Jewel;" and the speaker weighed the doublet at the end of his cane; "isn't there a Newgate cut about 'em?"

"Very Newgate," confessed Job. "But," said he, hastening from the subject, "what makes you suspect Mr. Wigmore?"

"I 'll tell you. Struck by his friendly offices, and thinking him something of a character, I asked him to the house of a friend I am visiting, and then our talk falling upon" —

"Won't you try to come down?" said Faddle, knocking at the door, and speaking as he opened it. "Won't you come down, Jewel? The widow will be up, and there 's somebody below, who — why, what 's the matter? You are friends still, I hope?" anxiously asked Faddle, as he marked the look of constraint on the face of Triton, and the perplexed countenance of Job. "Still friends?" he repeated.

"To be sure — good-bye, Jewel, good-bye — mum! — not a word," added Frank in a low tone, but not low enough to escape the pricked ears of Faddle — "not a word; we shall meet, and then" — and then in a louder note — "good-bye — wish you well — good-bye."

Faddle inwardly blessed his benignant stars that had brought him up stairs. "A feigned conciliation — a sham truce — 'we shall meet' — yes, yes — very good: thank heaven! there 's a magistrate!" All

this passed through the beating brain of Faddle: however, disguising his sagacity, he again addressed himself to Job. "You 'll come down — you must come down — here, John, take this rubbish away" — and Job's late habiliments were again boxed, and carried from the presence. "You must come down — I have some friends here whom you must know. Her ladyship was just now in the next room — ha! — I declare — look upon the lawn — her husband 's come — there is Sir" —

Job looked from his bed, and though the out-door object had suddenly moved, Job too clearly recognised through the under branches of a laurustinus, the well-known ninepin calves of Sir Scipio Mannikin. Job sank back upon his pillow, and wished to render up the ghost.

"You *will* come down?" repeated Faddle, his back turned upon the sufferer.

"In the evening — yes, in the evening." The doubting looks of Faddle compelled Job to peculiar emphasis; and the host, affecting satisfaction, left the room. We say affecting, for Faddle was not to be duped.

And again Job was under the same roof with Sir Scipio and Lady Mannikin; with the individual mischief — the sweet perdition of his hopes! What was to be done? As he asked himself for the twentieth time the perplexing question, his eye fell upon the *vera effigies* — in pen and ink — of William Ticket, scratched on the dying speech, fallen like a sybil's leaf

upon the bed. As his eye-balls hung upon the black lines, his imaginative fears made them undulate and tremble, and he saw, not William Ticket, but Job Pippins in his mortal throes! Nor were the terrors of Job without the best authority; for at the very time that he lay in the Blue Room steeped in the cold dew of horror, his garments, accidentally waylaid in the hands of John by the inquisitive Sir Scipio, were recognised as the identical covering of the kiss-robbing — artery-cutting — repeater-stealing barber! Great was the astonishment of Sir Scipio; and many and curious were the looks passed between his stern self and gentle wife (Mercy married to Justice, but with no power over the sword,) as the story was told of the delivery of the box at the lodge — the theft committed on Frank Triton — and the accident which put him under temporary obligation to Job's vestments.

"There is no doubt that the scoundrel," said Sir Scipio, and no man, from constant practice, gave more sonorous expression to the epithet — "that the scoundrel has joined the gang of ruffians prowling hereabout. Yes, yes" — and he looked at Lady Scipio as though about to promise her a delightful treat — "there 'll be a pretty cartfull. And this, Madam — this is the fellow you have pitied!" Lady Mannikin spoke not; but, with eloquent emotion, passed her handkerchief across her eyes. There is a tongue in pocket-handkerchiefs.

Faustus in his agony shrieked —

"Lentè, lentè, currite noctes equi!"

Not so, Job; he lay and prayed for night. He had made up his mind — he had determined to escape. It is true, he thought of the widow with a touch of tenderness that — then again he thought of his neck, and the widow passed away. Marriage was a doubtful good — but hanging was a certain evil. To stay for the widow, was to go to the assizes; Hymen and Jack Ketch were in his case so intimately allied, that he must have them both.

The evening came on, the stars appeared, and Job, with a heavy, heavy heart, looked abroad into the grey sky, and asked himself where he should sleep. He rose from his bed — precipitately dressed himself — went to the door — touched the handle — withdrew his fingers — sat down, and again and again pondered the policy of his departure. Now, he thought of the good dinners, the soft bed, and the servants in livery. And now, all his hopes would be extinguished by a black cap! Yes; fly he must: so, resolving to creep down stairs, silently gain the garden, and thence gain the open road, he with a sinking of the heart, and pausing once to listen for the widow — (he listened and he heard her not) — he placed his hat upon his head, and was about to open the door, when — his arms dropt to his side, and he fell — *come cadde un corpo morto!* — he fell into a chair — the door was double-locked!

At the first burst of perspiration consequent on this discovery, Job could not have parted with less

than two pounds of solid flesh. All was known — Sir Scipio had found him out — he was a lamb shut up for the knife! He listened, and he heard the clouted shoes of the parish constable ascending the stairs! No; it was his own heart thumping to get through his waistcoat. Job wiped his forehead, and tried to think. He had great presence of mind — but not in critical situations. He walked to the window; but gathered no counsel from the stars. He cautiously opened the casement, to contemplate the possibility of "a drop." Bacchus — bountiful Bacchus — prevented his taking it. Never was the jolly god so beneficent to wretched man! A vine of at least some fifty years growth — a vine, with arms of cable strength — grew up the wall of the house, offering the firmest footing to the fugitive. Had the purple toper visited Ariadne as Romeo visited Juliet, he could not have set up a better ladder. Job's feet and hands were in a trice among the fruitful cordage — and so lightly did he descend, that never a bud was lost to the helper.

Job stole along the garden, and, silent as a mole, made in the direction of the high road. Creeping down one of the green alleys that intersected the grounds, he was suddenly struck motionless by a voice that touched his heart-strings. He laid himself flat upon his belly, perspired, and listened. An umbrageous lilac curtained him around.

"Two husbands before I 'm thirty?" exclaimed a female voice in a note of perfect satisfaction. — Now, the speaker was no other than Bodkin, the widow's

maid. "Two husbands — a lord for a twelvemonth — and a third marriage at forty," was the reply: and Job gasped in agony as he recognised the deep, winning, subtle tone of Molly of the hut, removed to the precincts of Ladybird Lodge for the ostensible purpose of telling the future destinies of the anxious household. It seemed that for the last three days Molly had secretly driven her trade: every domestic, from the butler to the scullion, had crossed her hand and looked on future life.

"And now you must tell me about my mistress."

"The widow?" asked the black-eyed sybil.

"Will she — will she marry Mr. Jewel?"

"If nothing worse befal him," was the unsatisfactory answer.

"Worse!" cried Bodkin; "can any mischief threaten so sweet a gentleman?"

Job was generally above vulgar superstition; but in the present case he thought there might be something in a fortune-teller.

"At this moment," pronounced Molly, her voice deepening with her subject, "I see a gallows and a church — a noose and a wedding-ring — a coffin and a bride-bed."

"God bless us," cried Bodkin, "hang a gentleman!" —

"And why not?" asked the prophetess, quite unmoved by the probability of such a catastrophe.

"Hang Mr. Jewel!" still exclaimed Bodkin — "Why, what can he have done?"

There was a sudden rustling of the leaves — a quick footstep — and then another shrill, feminine, anxious voice, asked — "What can he have done?"

A delicious tremor went through the bones of Job as he heard the voice of the widow. It was, indeed, Mrs. Candy; won to the imprudence by the strong weakness of love, she had prompted her maid to touch upon the future fate of her mistress, herself hid the while among the bushes. Molly answered not; when the widow, with new fervour, laid a dollar in the gipsy's palm, and again repeated, with deeper tenderness, "What can he have done?" Molly was meditating, if possible, a satisfactory answer, when — when —

Job, worked upon by a thousand sweet emotions, and fearing to betray himself, lay and wriggled on the grass like a wire-snake in a pantomime. Holding his breath, and digging his face into the turf, two or three green blades unhappily entered his nostrils; and thus, when Molly was about to divine, Job published a loud sneeze. There was a death-like pause!

"A cat!" cried Molly.

"A man!" exclaimed the maid, with deeper knowledge: and instantaneously the three women, like a leash of startled hares, ran bounding off. Molly and Bodkin, not weakened by the weight of sorrow borne for the past six months by the widow, secured their retreat — but the widow, running with a more matron-like step, and accidentally coming in contact with Job, as he rose upon his knees, was locked — nay, double-

locked in his nervous arms. Of course she was about to give a scream that would have split the "unwedgeable and gnarled oaks," but Job exclaimed, "'T is I — your Jewel," and added to the evidence of voice the testimony of touch — and the scream of the widow, merely snapping a stay-lace, died mutely in her throat.

"You wicked man," said Mrs. Candy, "after such an illness to venture in the night air! Pray — pray return to the house."

"Impossible," cried Job, deeply impressed with the imprudence of such a step. "Impossible — my fate is fixed."

"What can you mean?" asked the widow with most peculiar astonishment.

"I say, my fate is fixed — but wherever I go, Madam, the recollection of your charms, your virtues — the sweet hours of sickness passed in the Blue Room — Oh, Ma'am! I am the unhappiest of men!"

"Don't say so," urged the widow, though at the time thinking the unhappiest of men the most picturesque object in creation. "Don't say so. What has happened?"

"Oh, Ma'am! I am a wretch hunted by evil fortune — a miserable, ill-starred man — a victim to accidents that — why, why was I born?" exclaimed Job, throwing his head up to the stars for an answer.

"I see it all!" cried the widow — "I see it all — tell me, Sir — pray tell me — I have heard the story from Mr. Faddle — but I thought you were secured —

and now it all comes upon me — but weren't you locked up?"

"I — I was!" — and Job's teeth chattered at the recollection.

"And yet you have eluded him — and — oh, yes — the fortune-teller spoke too truly — yes, your life, your precious life is forfeit to the law! they 'll — they 'll" — and the widow grew hysterical with the conviction, and she laid her head upon Job's shoulder as she finished the sentence — "they 'll hang you!"

Now, although Job had withstood the torment of his own fear of the gallows, he could not bear up against this touching corroboration; and the tears started to his eyes, and he stood dissolved, with one arm round the waist of the widow.

"And you have met — and you have shed his blood?"

"I did it for the best," said Job, his thoughts recurring to the apoplectic Sir Scipio in the waggon.

"No doubt — no doubt," replied Mrs. Candy with feminine charity — "but the world, Mr. Jewel — the world judges not of best intentions. And where — where is he now?" she asked with timid curiosity.

"In the Lodge."

"But are you certain of the worst?"

"Certain — I saw his legs among the branches, and" — a new gush of sorrow on the part of the widow awakened Job to new attentions.

"But this" — and Mrs. Candy wiped her eyes with marked decision — "this is no place for us — I mean

for you. You must fly — you must quit the country — in a brief time the affair will be forgotten, and then you may return — and" —

"True, Madam, true; 't would be the safest — wisest plan — but, since you have shown such kind concern, I will confess to you that I cannot leave England without" —

"Nay, Mr. Jewel" —

"I cannot stir from this spot without" — money, Job was about to say, but the widow was impatient.

"You are a man of honour, Mr. Jewel?"

"I am, Ma'am," and Job, anticipating an offered loan, put his hand upon his heart very boldly.

"Then — then be our two fates one — England, farewell — I'm thine for ever," and she sank upon Job's neck, and his knees knocked together with his new responsibility.

At this moment, shouting voices were heard in the direction of the house. Sir Scipio and Faddle were loudly encouraging searchers and pursuers.

"No time is to be lost!" exclaimed the widow — "this way — this way!" And Mrs. Candy wound through the bushes, Job mutely and wonderingly following her, the shouts growing louder — and a brace of pistol bullets being fired, as Job swore, within a hand of his curls. For a few minutes let us leave the fugitives to their fortune.

Faddle, morbidly fearful of the irascibility of Job, had locked his door to prevent what he otherwise looked upon and published as certain, — a duel between

Messrs. Jewel and Triton. He had unburthened his bosom to Sir Scipio, who, as a magistrate, proposed that the inhabitant of the Blue Room should be bound in heavy articles of the peace. For some time did they wait for the bell of Job; when Faddle, attended by Sir Scipio, proceeded to the Blue Room, where they found the window open and their Jewel gone. The affair was clear as day to Faddle: his guest, incited by his delicate sense of honour, had dropt from the window to keep a mortal assignation. On this, butler, footmen, grooms, lacqueys, all were armed, and all scattered about the grounds to seize the would-be homicides. They found not Frank Triton; for he had that day consented to be chairman at the Walton Club — a knot of brothers of the angle — and at the time of the search, was certainly about to measure his ground under the table. Neither did they find John Jewel, for he — however we shall return to him; — but they found, rolled up among the shrubs, armed to the teeth with crow-bar, centre-bit, and all the other implements of their profession, three gentlemen with one purpose — Phineas, Mortlake, and Bats, the triumvirate of the wattled hut. Two of them having fired in resistance, and thus satisfied their self-respect, modestly surrendered. Bats fought, but valour was in vain.

Let us return to the lovers.

They had crossed the bridge, when they espied a post-chaise rapidly approaching them, sent, as it appeared, for Doctor Lullaby, still a visitor at the Lodge,

for a grand christening next day at Wiggledon Park. The widow possessed sufficient arguments to induce the postilion to take herself and her Jewel into the vehicle and turn the horses' heads. Away they rattled, Job sitting, in the estimation of his affianced wife, a new-blown hero by her side; she full of tenderness — he full of hope, when — the horses stood fixed. Job let down the glass to call to the postilion, when a horse's head looked into the chaise, and he heard, he thought, in well-remembered notes — "Stand — your money!" The widow screamed — "Wigmore!" and felt for her purse. The horse withdrew his head, and when Job, trembling on the verge of dissolution, rose to give the treasure to the highwayman, he saw the animal with his forelegs stubbornly folded under him, and his rider tugging at the reins and digging with his spurs. Nor was the postilion blind to the accident, but lashing his horses, started on, and the wheel striking the head of the highwayman, knocked him senseless into the road. In four-and-twenty hours the inmates of the post-chaise were wedded man and wife.

Poor Wigmore — we mean the luckless Skinks — was found by a compassionate countryman, who recognised the horse as the property of Frank Triton, Esq.! It was a fine animal, but with one extraordinary defect, that of going upon its knees. The captain was delivered into the hands of the law. His further history is to be seen in that interesting miscellany which for the past few years has supplied the playhouses with their most touching dramas. It also contains brief

notices of Phineas, Mortlake, and Bats. As for Molly, she became a most respectable woman. She married a sheriff's officer, and wore diamonds from the small and uncertain profits of a sponging-house. Poor Skinks! In an evil hour did he boast of his knowledge of horse-flesh; of his power to cure any steed of any known or unknown vice, and, in a no less luckless hour did Frank Triton, taking him at his word, lend him his bright bay without naming its particular defect.

And what became of Job Pippins?

He married the widow — made the grand tour — sent, anonymously, fifty pounds to Frank Triton for his purse and clothes — a handsome repeater to Sir Scipio Mannikin (he was dead, but the present was not lost upon his successor,) — returned to England — kept hospitable house — and having plenty of money, was a decent, respectable, neutral kind of fellow; a frank, jolly dog, whom the luck of accidents had made so, and "couldn't help it."

JACK RUNNYMEDE;

THE MAN OF "MANY THANKS."

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THE MAN OF "MANY THANKS."

CHAPTER I.

JOHN RUNNYMEDE was descended from a long line of placemen: with him, patriotism was an instinct. He was the last of his race, and though he had not inherited even one slice of the white loaf, one of the smallest of the golden fishes whereon many of his ancestors had feasted, his patriotism was in no way weakened by the want. Fortunately, John had no son: we say, fortunately, for the child of the unrewarded patriot might have lapsed into the rebel. Happily, there is no such blot upon the escutcheon of the Runnymedes: the death of John was worthy of all the lives of all his progenitors.

Whilst we refuse ourselves the pride of exhibiting the genealogical tree of our hero, — a tree, determined by the heralds, to have first struck root in the court of the Conqueror — we will admit of no negative proofs of its antiquity and greatness. That a Runnymede has been known to sit in the stocks, shall be no evidence that a Runnymede has not sat upon the bench;

that another has been whipped for picking pockets, shall not annihilate a Runnymede once high in the exchequer; that one of the family has rung the bell of a scavenger, shall not deafen us to the appeal of him who once carried a milk-white wand in the presence. It is with the tree of genealogy as with the oak of the forest; we may boast of the timbers it has given to a state vessel, but say nought of the three-legged stools, the broomsticks and tobacco-stoppers made from the ends and chips. Now, that John Runnymede was the son of a prosperous wheelwright, ought not, in the belief of the reader, to affect his descent from even the courtiers of the Norman.

"Yes — yes — have my vote? To be sure he shall: Mr. Sidewind is a true patriot — a man who ought to die in Parliament — a man of principles — a practical man." Such was the loud avowal of Jack Runnymede, solicited for his vote by Mr. Sidewind's agent for the borough of —, but no matter; we will not speak ill of the dead. Jack, be it understood, had inherited the great right of voting with a very small property; and as that right, at the time of our narrative, was exercised by a very few, it was the more precious to the possessor. "Ha! — the purity of election; the proud privilege wrested by the bold barons from a tyrant — yes, yes, thank God! I 'm an Englishman." This was the constant thanksgiving of Jack, closing broken sentences on the value of Magna Charta — trial by jury — habeas corpus, and other political treasures enjoyed by Britons: and so strong was his gratitude

for these inestimable benefits, that it sometimes escaped him under circumstances not particularly demanding its avowal. Thus, one day walking with his friend Fibb — an oily tradesman and a great patriot — he was stopped short by a crowd, gathered to behold the public whipping of a petty larceny offender. As the culprit came along, yelling under the lash, Runnymede profoundly observed — "This, politically speaking, is a cheerful sight."

"Cheerful!" exclaimed Fibb, suddenly thrusting his hands into his pockets, and pursing his mouth, like a squirrel cracking nuts — "Cheerful!"

"Politically speaking," answered Jack. "When we consider the cost of this ceremony — the erection of a prison to secure — the salary of a judge to condemn — the cost of a hangman to whip an offender who, it may be, has only stolen to the value of a groat — I say, it is a sight to make us venerate the laws — yes, to make us bless our stars that we are Englishmen."

"So you said to Sir Peter Polygon, when he stood upon the hustings, covered with mud," said Fibb.

"And I said truly," returned Jack. "Nay, suppose he had been killed by the mob — was there not freedom of election, and would he not have died an Englishman?"

Now the next day Jack was to quit town to exercise, as he justly said, the noblest right of an Englishman; namely, to choose a man to make new laws, and to mend old ones. This was the third time

Jack had been called upon in the capacity of an elector, and never had his attendance been so necessary to the success of his cause; for a spirit of opposition menaced the return of the old member, accustomed to take his seat for the borough of — as he would take his easy chair. If, before, Jack felt himself to be only one Englishman, his dignity on the approaching event was multiplied by at least three. Nay, had he been about to return the whole Commons, he could not have entertained a stronger sense of his importance. "Happy land — glorious laws — heaven-born liberty — Magna Charta — habeas corpus — trial by jury" — all passed through his brain, and quickened his blood as he stept into the mail that was to convey him to the borough of —. He was about to seat himself for his journey, when he heard himself, in no bland accents, called by name — "Mr. Runnymede."

"Who calls Mr. Runnymede?" asked Jack, thrusting himself half out of the vehicle, and dilating his nostrils as if to snuff the inquirer.

"I 've a little affair, Mr. Runnymede" —

"Not now," said Jack — "not now, my good man — when I return — little affairs, indeed!"

"Well then, it 's a big affair — and you must come out," and with this the speaker grasped the hand of Jack.

"I tell you, I 'm going to the borough of — to give my vote" — cried Jack.

"*Give* your vote!"

"Yes, Sir," and Runnymede was full of the patriot — "give my vote, or do what I like with it. I suppose I may do what I like with it. Thank God! I 'm an Englishman," and as Jack finished the sentence he almost fell in a heap upon the pavement; hauled out of the mail — for the coachman had taken the reins, and no time was to be lost — by the man who had so anxiously addressed him. "What is this — what is this? Thank heaven! there 's the law — and thank —"

"We must do our duty, Mr. Runnymede," said the fellow, interrupting Jack in his thanks.

"And I must do mine," said Runnymede — "and my first duty is to give my vote — yes, to get" —

"Two thousand pounds," cried the man.

"Not so much as that," said Jack, unconsciously.

"Every farthing — for that 's what the writ against you says," — observed what proved to be a bailiff.

"A writ — and two thousand pounds — from whom? I don't owe two thousand pennies," exclaimed Runnymede, white with astonishment.

"All the better if you can prove it," said the catchpole. "The writ 's at the suit of Henry Parsons."

"Don't know such a man," shouted Jack — "and, two thous — why, what for?"

"That would be very ill manners in me to ask," said Mr. Eyes, the bailiff. "Come, Sir," he benevolently added, "don't get a crowd."

"But I tell you, I can't come — I" — at the moment the mail went off — "I shall lose my vote — I" —

"Shall I call a coach, Mr. Runnymede, or will you walk?" asked Eyes, without any comment.

"But you shall suffer for this," and Jack buttoned his coat very resolutely — "yes, yes — there are laws — thank heaven, there are laws! Parsons — two thousand pounds! I see it — you 've taken me for another man."

Eyes smiled — bent his brows — and meekly observed — "Never did such a thing in all my life, Sir."

"But you have — I know you have — never mind — it 's no matter — I 'm in your custody, it 's true — I shall lose my vote — my candidate may lose his election — but I don't care — there 's satisfaction to be had — yes, thank God! I 'm an Englishman!" Nor had John Runnymede ceased his many thanksgivings, ere he arrived at the modest dwelling of Mr. Eyes.

The prisoner was courteously shown into the private room of his gaoler, where company was assembled helping the time with whist. "Is the pig done?" and Eyes spoke in a low voice to his wife.

"Trumps led — not quite," said Rebecca; then bowing a welcome to Runnymede, and attending to the play — "a small club."

"Pig for supper," thought Runnymede — "so, Eyes has really changed his religion with his name"

(for the reader must learn that Eyes had long been known in the Hebrew world as Isaacs).

"The pig must be done," said Eyes to his wife, who nodded assent — "A little heart" — then to her husband — "I 'm sure, if it isn't done, it won't be for want of brandy and tobacco."

"Brandy and tobacco!" thought Jack, and looked suddenly in the face of Eyes, who civilly observed — "It 's too late to get bail to-night, Mr. Runnymede; but you 'll be very comfortable here, I assure you."

"I never knew anybody half so lazy," said Rebecca aside to her mate — "if you don't — (another trump) — if you don't manage something — (another — my trick) — you 'll lose the pig; his discharge came to-day — so you must — (trump again) — so you must" —

The attention of Eyes was called to Runnymede, who sat, violently knocking the floor with his toe, and contemplating with savage joy the prospect of legal satisfaction for the violence committed. Never had Jack felt so much an Englishman; never had the all-healing law appeared so gracious and so bountiful. The whole country — yes, the empire would thrill from one end to the other at his wrongs. He jumped up, animated by the thought.

"You 'll stop with us to supper?" said Eyes, with unusual hospitality.

Runnymede was big with the thought of satisfaction; and replied with dignity — "I thank you — I 'm not partial to pig."

"Pig," said Eyes; and "pig," said his wife Rebecca.

Jack, however, had some compassion, and therefore gave the bailiff another chance of saving himself from certain destruction. — "Mr. Eyes, before I retire to my room, I do solemnly assure you as a gentleman and" —

("The Jack of Spades," said a lady at whist) —

"As a gentleman, and what is more, as an Englishman, that I know no Mr. Parsons — that I owe no two thousand pounds. If this be no mistake, there are some scoundrels in the business; whom to blame I know not — but it strikes me that the" —

("Honours are divided," said Rebecca, and she made the cards.)

"Shall I show you to your room?" asked Eyes, who had heard enough. "If there is anything wrong, it can't be helped to-night; and to-morrow there 's no business — but on Monday morning" —

"Monday! The election will be finished on Monday — I — but, no matter — thank heaven! there 's the law — yes, thank God! I 'm an Englishman," saying which, Runnymede followed Eyes up stairs. Just as the chamberlain had reached the first flight, he heard his name roared out, coupled with no complimentary epithets —

"What, Eyes! thief — catchpole — vermin of the earth — cannibal scoundrel!" —

"Mr. Noland — Mr. Noland," cried Eyes in an offended tone, and approached the abusive prisoner,

who sat in a room, the door of which opened to the passage. Jack stood behind Eyes, and with some difficulty made out a man — who sat rocking in a chair — from clouds of tobacco smoke issuing from a short pipe, buried to the bowl in his mouth. A night-cap hung on the side of his head; and, his eyes filled with a sullen fire — his brow bent — his mealy face stained with red blots — his chin bristled with a fortnight's beard — and his sensual lips moving like worms with suppressed rage, he kept rocking his chair, and growled up into the face of Eyes — "You robber of the gallows! when am I to get out?"

"I hope, Mr. Noland, you have wanted nothing? Didn't Rebecca send you the brandy?" asked Eyes.

"Brandy! yes — yes," cried the prisoner, and taking an empty bottle from the table, he flung it on the floor, and laughed in his throat, — "There 's the brandy!"

"Well, you shall have more, Mr. Noland — only, as a keepsake — do me this one little *pictur*" — said Eyes.

"I won't — not a touch — not a touch. I 'll work no more for gaol-birds. Damn me! I 'm a gentleman — do you mean to say I 'm not a gentleman?" and Noland rose staggeringly from his chair to assert his gentility. "What! because I don't put dolls upon canvas — and smear petticoats of velvelt, I 'm not a gentleman," and he fell like clay into his seat: his head rolling from side to side, he growled — "Humph! — velvet — what's velvet? Is any man's straw like mine! Any man's straw, I say? Sir —! oh yes, Sir —! *Sir!* paints lords, and so he 's a Sir! — can he paint a pig?

Can he paint a pig, I say? Makes judges' wigs, too — and fine ladies' curls and" — and he laughed with fixed teeth; "ha! ha! I should only like to catch him at bristles." Eyes approached the table, at which Noland sat, and bent his head towards a half-finished picture of a sow and her litter, devouring it with the looks of a connoisseur. As Eyes stooped, rapt by the art, a violent sense of his own merits came anew upon the artist, and staring for a minute to take good aim, he caught the unconscious bailiff by the neck, and grasping it like a Cyclops, beat his head upon the table, roaring above the voice of the injured officer, "I say, put 'em all together — can they paint a pig? Tell me that — can they paint a pig?"

This loud appeal, with the cries of her husband and the voice of Runnymede, brought Rebecca and her whist-party up stairs — "Goodness me! Eyes! Mr. Noland! — what's the matter?" exclaimed the wife; when the artist quitted her husband's neck, rose, and in simpering drunkenness addressed the lady — "What! Mrs. Isaacs!" —

"Isaacs," cried the lady, disdainfully.

"Beg your pardon, but as I had the happiness of knowing you before you were a Christian, Mrs. Eyes — I" — and here, catching the officer by the shoulder, the artist roared a laugh, and again throwing himself in the chair, shouted — "Well, what do you think of the pigs? Was there ever prettier meat?"

"Beautiful — beautiful, Mr. Noland," said Eyes, rubbing his neck, and glancing at the unfinished pic-

ture — "like life, I declare — I'm sure you can almost hear 'em grunt."

"Almost? Quite!" cried Noland, and his clenched fist fell like a hammer on the table.

"I never knew anybody work so quick as you," said the officer, with a horrid smile. "Why, you could finish it to-night?" Noland made no answer, but looked doggedly at the speaker, and pointed his forefinger towards the shivered bottle. — "Rebecca, love," said Eyes, "some brandy for Mr. Noland."

"And Mrs. Isaacs — Eyes, I mean — more tobacco," was the amended order of the artist. "Now, I say — you old thief, when am I to get out of your stye?" — and Noland spread himself in the chair awaiting an answer.

"Your discharge must come on Monday — but you 'll dine with us to-morrow, Mr. Noland? Yes — for the last time," said the bailiff; — "but you 'll finish the pictur?"

"Ha! — that is — I may come to dinner if I provide the pork. It 's always been so, eh? Never mind — I 'll mend all this — yes, yes — you rascally mantrap — this is the last time you catch me — this is — oh, the brandy!"

"Good night, Mr. Noland — good night," said Eyes.

"We shall expect you to-morrow at dinner," said Rebecca, prompted by her husband; and the visitors bade good night to the artist, leaving him silently glaring at the bottle.

"I only hope these painted things may be worth half what they cost us," said the bailiff's wife, before she slept.

"Hav'n't I got twenty out of him, and only for a little liquor and meat — and whenever one discharge has come, hav'n't I got something else put in against him, and all on purpose to keep him here and paint? Why, by-and-bye, when he 's dead, them pictures will be a fortune to us. Do you think I 'm a fool?" And the bailiff fell into a sweet slumber.

And where, it will be asked, was Jack Runnymede? In bed; in a room with bars at the windows, and the door locked, and chained, and bolted on the outside; a prisoner for the sum of two thousand pounds, he, as he truly averred, not owing two thousand pence. "It is no matter," said Jack as he turned restlessly from side to side — "I shall be amply repaid for this — yes, thank heaven! there is the law. I am deprived of my liberty by the perjury of some scoundrel — I am cheated of the exercise of a dear privilege, and at a moment shut up here in a cage like a wild beast — but what of it? There 's a remedy — a certain, a glorious remedy — for, thank God? I 'm an Englishman!"

CHAPTER II.

THE next day passed as pleasantly with Jack as the company of his host and hostess would permit: as for the painter, his dinner with a new supply of brandy and tobacco was carried up stairs, Eyes remarking that it was a pity to disturb the artist at his work, if his heart was set upon finishing it. The Monday morning came, and ere Jack — active as he ever was, with the feelings of a Briton — could be up, Eyes, his keeper, was at his bed-side; and with a smiling face, observed "There was no occasion to send for bail — he could, upon consideration, take Mr. Runnymede's single signature to a bond — he was a man of honour" —

"And, thank heaven! an Englishman," added Runnymede; and no baron witnessed Magna Charta with greater dignity, than possessed Jack as he affixed his name to the bail-bond. This ceremony performed, a few minutes saw him in the office of his attorney.

"Bless me! Mr. Runnymede — I thought you were gone to, — to vote for Sidewind?" cried the lawyer.

"Look at that," said Jack, and he threw down the copy of the writ politely afforded him by Eyes.

"What! Eh? — Parsons — two thousand pounds," said Mr. Candidus.

"Don't know the man — don't owe a penny," said Runnymede in a voice almost rising to a shriek — "there — arrested — as I was in the mail — carried

off, I may say by force — locked up, and couldn't even send a note — but, thank heaven!" —

"Who 's the attorney? — Oh! Ha! ha! Allwork, of Lyon's-Inn! Phoo — an election trick! You've lost your vote," observed Candidus.

"To be sure I have — but I possess the proud birthright of a Briton. Yes — thank heaven! I 'm an Englishman — and satisfaction" —

"My dear Mr. Runnymede, what can we prove?"

"Prove! Hav'n't I been locked up — I — a free-born Briton — hav'n't I been kidnapped — incarcerated for more than six-and-thirty hours?"

"But Allwork isn't worth powder and shot," said Candidus.

"No more are carrion crows," replied Jack, "but we shoot 'em for all that."

"Yes, but in this case the sport is very expensive. See here, Mr. Runnymede; if Allwork prove true to his employers, we can only go against him. Very well; if we should get a verdict — and it is by '*ifs*' that the profession lives — if we should get a verdict" —

"I shall punish the pettifogger," exclaimed Runnymede, swelling with expected triumph.

"And you 'll pay your own costs," replied Candidus, very meekly — "and they 'll not be a little."

"But I 've lost my vote. Can't I prove damages?" asked Runnymede.

"That fact rests in your own bosom," remarked

Candidus, and he rubbed one hand with the other and his eye twinkled.

"It's no matter, Mr. Candidus — I'll not trouble you — good morning — you may be right — I dare say you are — but I can never be convinced — no, never while I breathe the air of Albion, that a man is to be locked up by another man, as you say, not worth powder and shot — and the culprit is only to be punished at the further cost of the injured party. No, Sir — I have a respect for your character — for your great legal knowledge — but I can't believe this — no — I can't — for, thank heaven! I'm an Englishman."

Jack Runnymede quitted the office of his friendly adviser, determined to seek another more learned in the law than the simple Mr. Candidus. In an unlucky moment he ran against Earwig, a man of multifarious information; a man who, having no history of his own, made himself proficient in the history of every other person. He knew the boarding-school, its mistress, nay, the names of all its teachers, from which the Countess of — eloped with a marching ensign, and the sign of the public-house at which the fugitives were overtaken. He could point out the apple-tree which the Lord Chancellor robbed, and knew the usher employed to flog him for the delinquency. No man was more keenly alive to the frailties of his fellow-creatures; no man had a stronger relish of defect in all things. To have discovered the spots in the sun, was to him greater than the discovery of the laws that govern the sun itself.

"Why, Jack? — Where now? — What's the matter? Something wrong? Yes — I'm sure, there's something wrong?" said the acute Earwig.

"Wrong! Do you know a fellow, named Allwork, of Lyon's-Inn?" asked Runnymede.

"To be sure I do; but his name's not Allwork," replied Earwig with decision.

"No?"

"No. His name's Chuff — John Chuff. He's Essex — from Prittlewell: came to town — made a little money — I won't say how — but old things came up — so he leaves London; after a time, comes back — in mourning, deep as a raven; crape about his hat enough for a buccaneer's flag; the death's head was in the hat — ha! ha! — his aunt had died — and had left him her property, if he'd take her name. He took both. Hem!"

"But I hear," said Runnymede, "that he's not worth powder and shot."

"Very wrong. He is worth powder — and shot — and rope," averred Earwig.

"And he changed his name? Why, what was it that came up? Tell me," cried Runnymede.

"Don't you know? Once stole two ducks —

"Never?" exclaimed the incredulous Jack.

"And a hand-saw" — continued Earwig.

"It's impossible," cried the charitable Runnymede.

"And a chisel," asseverated Earwig, becoming enthusiastic as he repeated the iniquities of Chuff.

"Are you sure of all this?" asked Jack.

"Know the farmer who lost the ducks — have seen the carpenter who owned the tools — once dined with the magistrate who committed the thief to prison — and have read the culprit's name in the gaol books. Depend upon it — 't is all true. Mind — 't was before he took to the law; and somehow — after a year's hard labour — he got into an office — and so on, and so on — and now, John Chuff is Arthur Allwork! All true? No, no, I 'm too sorry for the actual faults of my fellow-men to circulate slander. We have all our failings, Mr. Runnymede; and a little charity costs nothing."

"Now — now I have him," thought Jack, and the whole day and part of the night did Runnymede employ, considering the best means whereby, despite the cold, prudential advice of Candidus, to obtain satisfaction of Allwork. The morning came; and Jack had not determined on his mode of revenge, albeit his purpose was become unalterable. The following paragraph in the papers did not, it may be conceived, tend to soften his stern resolve: —

"— Election. On the close of the poll this day, the numbers for both candidates were equal; upon which the returning officer gave the casting vote for the new candidate. Mr. Sidewind is, consequently, no longer member for the borough of —."

Runnymede cast the journal from him with disgust. "And the money that must have been spent! — and that I should have lost the proud prerogative of an

Englishman! — but — yes — yes — yes," and with a thought there lay before him pens, ink, and paper.

Oh, Jack! hadst thou no good genius, no friendly sylph to dry the ink up with its fanning wings — to waft the paper, like thistle-down above the chimney-tops — to seize the pen, and fly with it beyond the moon? Hadst thou no good spirit to serve thee? Wert thou left to stab thyself with a quill? Better had it been for Jack to have had plumes above his hearse, than a grey goose feather under his nose.

"There, Mr. Candidus — there, Sir; I think you 'll call that something. See; no sneaking anonymous — no, no; I never withhold my name from my sentiments, for thank heaven! I am" —

"What is all this, Mr. Runnymede," asked Candidus, as he put on his spectacles, and took up a newspaper, flung by Jack with a rejoicing air upon the office-table.

"Look, Sir — look," and Jack emphatically tapped his fingers on a letter to the editor, Jack's work of yesterday — "there, Sir; read — read."

Mr. Candidus cleared his throat and read —

"*TO THE EDITOR OF* —

"*Sir*, — *It is the proud boast of every Briton that for every wrong he may find a remedy. The law, Sir, with its ample shield, protects the poor from the tyranny of the rich, and in the scales of English justice a peer in all his robes weighs not the weight of a feather more than a naked ploughman.*" —

"Naked ploughman," repeated Jack, enamoured of the picture. Candidus continued —

"*No, Mr. Editor, — in this our happy, sea-girt isle, the marble palace of the duke,*" — Candidus paused.

"What now?" asked Jack.

"I never saw a 'marble palace' in England," said the unimaginative attorney.

"No matter for that," said Runnymede. "Go on." Candidus obeyed.

"*The marble palace of the duke can no more harbour oppression than can the straw-thatched cottage of the peasant. In Magna Charta, Mr. Editor, the name of every English subject is supposed to be written*" — (Candidus coughed, and then proceeded) — "*is supposed to be written, and liberty his god-like legacy. Yes, Mr. Editor, liberty is the vital blood of an Englishman; rob him of liberty, and you deprive him of life: it would be more easy for a Briton to exist without a heart than to respire without his liberty.* (Another cough.) "*Liberty, Mr. Editor, rocks the cradle of an Englishman — guides his infant steps — walks with him through life — and bends above his grave. Socrates had his good genius; an Englishman has his liberty.*"

"Very true — very excellent," said Mr. Candidus, through his cough, and about to take off his spectacles.

"Go on — go on," cried Jack with animation, "for now we come to it." Candidus adjusted his spectacles, and resumed.

"*If, then, Mr. Editor, liberty be all this — and who*

is base enough to deny a tittle of it? — what shall be said of the wretch, who for the basest purpose seeks to rob a Briton of his birth-right — to deprive him of the sacred legacy bequeathed him by his forefathers? And yet, such a miscreant is found to exist. To be sure, the man who is guilty of one species of theft must be capable of another; and he, whose oblique morality cannot, like Hamlet, distinguish ducks *from* a handsaw, *or in other words*" —

"What *is* all this?" asked Candidus, looking as through a fog at Runnymede.

"Go on," said Jack, rubbing his hands, "go on — '*ducks*' from a '*handsaw*' — that 's a slight touch I think?" —

"*Or, in other words, he who in his youth has not hesitated to steal poultry from a pond, he who has not stickled to rob the farmer and the artisan, can in later years hardly be supposed when tempted by lucre, to respect the liberty of his fellow. The matured abettor of perjury is the natural growth of the early thief!*"

"Mr. Runnymede!" cried Candidus.

"I think that 's a tolerable period," said Jack in a glow of vanity. "He 'll not sleep to-night. But go on."

"*In a word, Mr. Editor, and to prevent the slightest misapprehension as to the person pointed at in these hasty remarks,*" —

"Hasty!" repeated Candidus, with a sigh.

"*I beg most distinctly to state — for* magna est veritas *— that I allude to Mr. Arthur Allwork, of Lyon's-*

Inn, alias John Chuff, Prittlewell, Essex; whose infamy, if heaven spare me life, I trust to hold up to the disgust and execration of every true-born Briton. At present I must beg to be excused from entering into further details" —

"Yes — that 's enough for the present," said Runnymede complacently.

"Quite," answered the attorney, and proceeded to finish the epistle —

"— *into further details, — and beg to subscribe myself your constant reader, and very humble servant*, JOHN RUNNYMEDE."

"That 's a letter!" said Jack.

"It is," said Mr. Candidus, looking compassionately at the writer — "and is it all your own work?"

"Every word of it," cried Jack, with all the susceptibility of an author — "every syllable, Mr. Candidus."

"And you have, doubtless, made your mind up to the consequences?" asked the lawyer. "You are prepared to stand an action for libel?"

"Libel! my dear Sir, do you think me capable of falsehood? — why, it 's the truth, Sir — every word, the truth; and as an Englishman," —

"Well, well, Mr. Runnymede, if you will ruin yourself, you must, I suppose, be allowed to select your own means. If you will jump into a well after truth, you mus' n't complain if you are left to drown there a martyr." This said, the attorney addressed himself to some papers before him: Jack, however,

could not silently assent to the position of the legalist.

"No, Mr. Candidus; no, Sir; even were a man — an Englishman so to perish, the verdict of the world would be" —

"Suicide, under temporary derangement," continued the cool Mr. Candidus.

The generous spirit of Runnymede shrank from further contest with a mind incapable of elevated sentiment; and returning the fatal gazette to his pocket, he bade a frozen good day to the lawyer, who, with an eloquent shake of the head, acknowledged the civility, and again fell to his papers.

Runnymede walked with the stride of an injured man towards his lodgings. He had expected "loud applause and aves vehement" from his legal friend, who, in the opinion of the sufferer, had read a homily on the profitableness of falsehood. Jack had knocked at his own door, and had his foot upon the scraper, when he was addressed by a thin young man, with a yellow face, in very brown black. — "I believe, Sir, your name is Runnymede?"

"It is," and Jack seemed to speak with new pride.

"John Runnymede?" asked the circumstantial stranger.

"John Runnymede," replied Jack very sonorously.

"Then, Sir —."

Mr. Candidus was a true prophet; Allwork had

not lost an hour in the pursuit of a remedy for his bleeding reputation. The stranger at the lodging door of Jack had, in a manner not to be misunderstood, made known to him that Allwork would appeal to the laws of his country for vengeance on his slanderer.

"The sooner the better," exclaimed Jack with a radiant smile — "for thank heaven! I can then make known the truth — yes, thank heaven! I shall then feel what it is to be an Englishman."

CHAPTER III.

JACK RUNNYMEDE sat in the office of Gregory Crane, Furnival's-Inn, a skilful and, upon his own showing, a pious attorney-at-law, concerned for Jack in his coming trial with Allwork. The chivalrous defendant had disdained the mean advice of the conscientious Candidus who had counselled, if it were possible, an arrangement with the vilified party. Hence, in great disgust, Jack sought another Mentor.

"And when — when, Mr. Crane, shall we get into court?" — asked the impatient Runnymede.

Crane had opened his mouth to reply, when he was called into the outer office, to meet a client, swelling like a frog.

"Mr. Crane," said the stout stranger — "this is shameful, Sir; there 's that Pierrepoint — just dashed by me on horseback — on an Arab mare, Sir; an Arab

mare. The saddle — the saddle — for what I know would pay my bill."

"Well, Sir, and — heaven illumine me! what can I do?" asked Crane.

"Do, Sir? why, serve the writ — do?"

"It 's mighty well," replied Crane with ineffable composure "to say, serve the writ; but we can't do impossibilities. The bailiffs — heaven illumine them!" —

"Heaven!" echoed the scornful visitor.

"What I mean to say is this, Sir; no lawyer can do more than issue a writ: the rest" — and Crane turned up his eyes towards a portrait of Coke — "the rest is in the hands of Providence."

The visitor wrathfully observed — "He ought to pay me, if he pays anybody."

"To be sure; but if he doesn't pay anybody — heaven turn his heart! — you can't complain of partiality." Thus spoke Crane.

"Some debts," said the dogged creditor, "are nothing more than book accompts. Some tradesmen if they 're never paid can't be wronged: they 're safe from loss: now it 's very difficult — it 's very difficult to cheat a tailor, or nine times out of ten, a wine-merchant."

"I can't say — I never tried," said Crane languidly. "But you don't call a wine-merchant safe?"

"Yes I do — that is, very often — if you return the bottles. In fact, bad debts are only bad in any trade but mine. A man can't pay his tailor, his boot-

maker, his hatter, and there 's an end of it — it 's a simple contract, and he can't meet it. But, Sir, in an accompt for walking-sticks, there 's what I call a moral obligation."

"An article of luxury, to be sure," said the lawyer.

"Especially when a man rides on horseback," added the tradesman.

"Let me see. Heaven direct us! — I am afraid" — and Crane spoke with a sigh — "I am afraid, we can't make him a bankrupt."

"He doesn't owe me quite enough," suggested the creditor.

"That 's a pity," rejoined the attorney. "And then he 's a gentleman — ha! the Lord have mercy upon us! — those gentlemen give us a great deal of trouble."

"He 'd a walking-stick a week for two months," roared the creditor. "I shouldn't have cared for the mounted dragon's-blood — nor the pheasant — nor the partridge-eye — nor the iron — nor the ivory — nor the green-ebony, — but — but," and the poor man seemed softening into tears — "but the unicorn I can't swallow."

Indeed, it was too much to expect of any man. We know that Vincent de Beauvais assures us that in his time unicorns were commonly to be caught by chaste virgins, devoted to the sport. Now, whether in latter days fewer ladies assert the needful licence, or whether unicorns themselves are become scarce, we shall not linger here to inquire. Certain it is —

a unicorn is not every day devoted to the bucks of London. And thus, when our tradesman had possessed himself of that, which the temporising scepticism of modern times consents to call a unicorn's horn — and thus when exquisitely mounted, it was yearned for by fifty opening purses, — it was unkind, it was unprincipled of Henry Pierrepoint not to assuage his thirst for walking-sticks with dragon's-blood — not to soothe himself with partridge-eye; — but, careless of consequences, reckless of a previous bill — thoughtless of the low profits of the honest tradesman, struggling with a wife and five children — (though six is the catholic number) — we say, it argued in the debtor a foolish brain, and we fear a perverted heart, under such multiplied circumstances of aggravation, to rob a man of his unicorn. We are inclined to think that Mr. Crane was of our opinion; for touched by the sufferings of his client, he called in the senior clerk.

"Mr. Terms, really, with the blessing of heaven, this Mr. Pierrepont must be arrested."

"Yes, Sir. We 'll do our best, Sir; but there 's no catching him," — said Terms.

"Pish!" cried the owner of the unicorn; and the chief clerk looked with sudden dignity from the goose-quill he was cutting into a pen with the same coolness that a bravo sharpens his knife. — "I say, pooh!" cried the undaunted dealer in dragon's-blood — "I saw Pierrepont myself to-day — he was on an

Arabian mare, I don't mind expense — for my spirit's up — and I will have him."

"Come, Mr. Terms — how — how, under Providence, may he be served with a writ?" asked Mr. Crane.

"You don't mind expense, Sir?" said Terms, very mildly.

"No — I don't!" — and the man of sticks wiped his brow, and struck his fist on the desk.

"Well, the surest way I know to serve him with a writ is this," —

"Name it, Sir — name it."

"You say he rides an Arab mare?"

"I saw him — this very day, I saw him." —

"Then the likeliest plan to serve the writ is," —

"Yes?"

"To mount a bailiff on a Persian horse?" and Terms nibbed his goose-quill.

At length the tradesman fell in with a less expensive mode of service, subsequently suggested by Terms, and quitted the office, comforted by Mr. Crane, who — under Providence — assured him that Mr. Pierrepont would soon be in a gaol.

Turn we now to Jack, lapsed into profoundest slumber. We can take it upon ourselves to answer, that saving the employer or his clerks, no man, since the invention of vellum, ever slept so soundly in the office of a lawyer as, at the hour we speak of, did Jack Runnymede: there was no such snoring in the recollection of the oldest solicitor.

"Mr. Runnymede!" cried Crane; and at this moment, the inn clock struck five — "Oh! — Baldwin, where's my watch?" and the attorney spoke to a boy at the desk.

"Not done yet, Sir," and the boy puckered his lips.

"Not done! — and — what are you laughing at? Not done? — why, I sent you for it this morning, and what did the fellow say?"

"He told me to tell you, Sir, that you couldn't have it."

"The scoundrel — Heaven forgive me! — who did you see?"

"I saw his journeyman, Sir; and when I said I came for Mr. Crane's watch, after some talk he said he 'd bring" — Baldwin was interrupted by a loud knock at the door, which, opened, discovered the journeyman true to his word.

"Oh, my watch?" said Crane, prophetically, and he again went into the outer office.

"Your watch, Sir," replied the man with a slight difficulty of speech, contracted that afternoon at the Blue Posts.

"There wasn't much the matter with it — 't is an excellent watch?"

"Quite a trifle, Sir — and as you say, a capital thing," and the man produced the chronometer.

"I have had it these twenty years, and 't was always true as the sun — it never stopt before. What could ail it?"

"Look, Sir;" said the man, exposing the works of the watch, and putting a glass in the fingers of Crane — "look, Sir; somehow or the other, there 's a long, thin hair got in the balance-wheel."

"I see it — I thought some such trifle," said the lawyer.

"I have but to use these pliers — draw it out — and your watch goes on as well as ever."

"Heaven be praised! — well, make haste — for I have an appointment, and shall be past my time," urged Crane.

"Well, I sha'n't do it," cried the man, and grasping the watch in one hand, he laid his folded arms upon the table, and his face darkened as, in defiance, he turned it towards the lawyer.

"You won't pull out the hair? — heaven illumine! — then, give it me," commanded the attorney.

"What! you 've forgotten me, Mr. Crane?"

"Eh! Joshua Daly? Bless me! — I made — that is, you were a bankrupt fourteen years ago."

"I was. For twenty years I 'd never missed a bill — never let a man ask twice; an accident — a trifle — a hair in the balance-wheel — stopped me at a second. If you recollect, I showed you what it was — showed how a little time would serve to pluck out the hair, as I may say, and set me going again, You wouldn't hear me, Mr. Crane — you know, you wouldn't; — and now" — and Daly threw up the window.

"What are you going to do, man?" cried the attorney.

"I 'm going to teach you this lesson: in future, not to break a poor fellow to pieces for one little hair in the balance-wheel. In your own words, Mr. Crane, I 'm going to make a bankrupt of your repeater."

And as the words were uttered, the golden watch of Gregory Crane was shattered to pieces on the stones beneath. The owner stood speechless and aghast. The spoiler took the door in one hand, and holding up his fore-finger, exclaimed to the dumb-stricken lawyer — "you 'll recollect the hair in the balance?" So saying, he vanished: next morning the shop was to be let, nor master nor man was there.

Now, the ruling passion of Mr. Crane was to make bankrupts; and few there were, however flourishing in appearance, proof against this inclination. We are disposed to think he would have found a deficit in the accompts of Plutus. And then he laboured with such apparent pleasure in the vocation, that we are convinced he thought he was working for the ultimate good of the gazetted. "Better make him a bankrupt," was Crane's constant advice to a consulting client. He seemed to look upon a tradesman as Columbus looked upon an egg; to make the dealer stand the firmer, it was with Crane indispensable that he should first be broken.

CHAPTER IV.

MEN, falling asleep in a conservatory, have been known to die an aromatic death — to sleep sweetly for ever. Now Jack Runnymede slept in the office of Gregory Crane; and the *genius loci* had spell-bound the brain of the sleeper. He had seen visions of drollery and terror — a strange, phantasmagoric jumble of the ludicrous and shocking. Jack dreamt that he was in the Arcady of the infernal regions — and there, lying on a brimstone bank, his tail coiled like a sleeping adder, was Beelzebub himself, piping as "he should never grow old." The devil puzzled Jack; for looking steadfastly at him, the dreamer saw in the infernal musician, now the likeness of one man and now of another. His face was perpetually changing to a resemblance of fifty people — and some of them most respectable inhabitants of earth — known to Runnymede. And now, would the devil look like Jack's first love, and now would he wrinkle the brown lips of his present landlady. And the music the devil played was, to the ears of Jack, not unlike a great deal of the music of this world. And what think you, was the devil's occupation? That of a shepherd: yea, as he piped, he kept his eye upon a flock of sheep. In five minutes, Jack was as familiar with the devil as though he had known him all his life. But it may be thus with those determined upon his acquaintance. We give the following conversation reported by the waking Jack.

"A good day to you, shepherd."

"A fair, bright day to you, my gentle swain," blandly answered the infernal pastor.

"Lord have mercy upon us!"—(the devil frowned)—"what dog is that?" And Jack stared at the devil's sheep-dog.

"Good Lex — good Lex," said the devil, patting the dog's head with the hand of affection.

"The devil has a loveable nature to like you," thought Jack, staring at the dog. "Of what breed may he be?" ventured Jack to ask aloud.

"Lex is a bitch," said the devil gravely. "Do you want a little pup?" The appearance of the animal promised fecundity.

Jack paused; and then again he asked — "What breed?"

"None in particular, but sometimes all," replied the enigmatical devil. "Sometimes the pups of Lex begin as lap-dogs, pretty little spaniels — then they turn to mastiffs — then to lurchers — and then, and that's most common, they often end as bloodhounds. Will you have a little pup?" again asked the devil.

"I'll never keep a dog," said Jack, timidly rejecting the favour.

"Lex will eat anything. Before now, her pups have devoured a whole mansion, and after that picked white the bones of the master. Will you have a little pup?"

Jack shook his head, and resolutely answered, "no." The ingenuous praise of the shepherd was sufficient

for Jack; and the bitch herself had a sinister look, quite worthy of her master's eulogium. Her hair was strong and coloured like rusty wire — her ears hung flapping down like a chancellor's wig — and her eye had something in it terribly human. "No Lex for me," repeated Jack. The devil again took up his pipe, and played what Jack in his ignorance thought a jig.

"A very fine flock," said Jack, casting his eyes upon the sheep. "How goes mutton, now?"

"Heavy," replied the devil, and again he piped.

"Pretty creatures! What a fine thing is a sheep to us! — his meat fills our bellies — his wool clothes our backs — his entrails delight our ears. Every thing about him is made a blessing to man."

"Especially the parchment," said the devil; and he cocked his eye, pulled Lex by the ear, and once more played his pipe.

"They 'll make fine meat," observed Jack, viewing the broad backs of the flock. "Fine meat!"

"Meat!" cried the devil, and he laid down his pipe, and rose to what seemed his full height, and with a fine satanic frown, reiterated — "Meat! do you take me, fellow, for a butcher?"

"No," stammered Jack, and he felt as he could hide himself under a mushroom — "No, you are" —

"Shepherd," and the devil shot up six feet higher as he spoke — "shepherd to the honourable society of attornies. We kill for skins to-morrow. Graziers breed meat — but how much of law parchment is from the devil's own flock?"

And so saying, the devil vanished with a rattling sound, and Jack looked about in his dream, and found himself in the office of Mr. Crane, with all the lids of the japanned deed-cases flung open, and from fifty boxes, at least a hundred figures, puppet size, the incarnation of the goodness, guilt, and folly of the writings therein, arose. From one marriage-settlement rushed forth a brutal pigmy, dragging by her long flaxen locks, his one year wife: from another, gaily tripped a self-contented gentleman, light and airy beneath a hundred weight of antlers. Now, a grey-coated, white-haired, yellow-faced little hunks, would emerge from a will, followed by a crowd of poor relations; flinging a shilling at them, the old gentleman gives his wealth to trustees for a chapel. And now, from title-deeds would rise a stately mansion, in an old, old park, and now, it would change into a house-of-cards; and now the trunks of forest oaks would dwindle into dice-boxes. From the will of a fond old miser who had left all to his nephew, Jack saw a grey-haired wretchedness, hoarding farthings in a rotten sack, — from the last testament of a doting husband tying up his wife from a second marriage, was seen the disconsolate widow seated on the knee of a fox-hunter. Talk of churchyards and catacombs and blasted heaths, thought Jack in his sleep, there is no such place for spectres as the office of Gregory Crane, attorney.

At this thought of the sleeper, the lid of the private strong-box of Crane rose up, and out came a thing out a span high, the diminutive likeness of the lawyer

himself. In his hand he held a gazette wet from the press: as he looked upon it, some half-dozen bankrupts, with their wives and little children, formed in ring about him. The attorney-ghost then laid the paper by, rubbed his hands, placed them behind him, and as he looked at the faces surrounding him, his own face glowed like a Dutchman's above a bed of tulips. Jack watched the attorney with breathless interest; indeed, the conduct of the spectre commanded solemn attention; for, having carefully surveyed the crowd about him, the ghost grinned like an ogre — turned up his large coat sleeves, and seized a bankrupt, the heaviest of the lot. To the terror of Jack, Crane shook the man in his teeth as a cat shakes a mouse. Jack could endure it no longer; he jumped from his seat, exclaiming —

"Crane! you old scoundrel!"

"What!" cried the indignant attorney; and then in a milder tone — "Heaven illumine me! scoundrel! Mr. Runnymede!"

"Eh!" and Jack sank in the chair, and rubbed his thumbs in his eyes, and gaped at the lawyer in the flesh, who opportunely arrived to hear the opinion of the dreamer. "Is it you, Mr. Crane? Well, I declare — I ask pardon — but I was having such a scandalous dream about you."

"You shouldn't even dream scandal — I won't swear that it isn't actionable," sternly replied the lawyer. "But Mr. Runnymede — to business" —

"To business," echoed Jack, with a look of alacrity.

"This may be a difficult case, Mr. Runnymede — but you shall have justice — more, Sir, you shall have law!" Jack started. "What's the matter, Sir?"

"Nothing," replied Jack — but he spoke not ingenuously; something was the matter. The reader already has not forgotten the vision of the satanic shepherd: and the truth is, when Crane with one of his hardest smiles — and there are smiles that make some faces look more stony — said, "you shall have law," the speaker seemed to Jack to wear the very shape and countenance — to speak in the very tones of the infernal pastor, when he smiled and asked — "will you have a little pup?" Jack started at the extraordinary similitude. "All we want," said Runnymede with an effort, "is justice; and with truth on our side, — can we, as Englishmen, — with the blessings of Magna Charta — the invaluable right of trial by jury?" —

"Very right, indeed, Mr. Runnymede — very right; no, I think we are pretty safe. You spoke of witnesses?"

"The men, Mr. Crane — the very men: I have no doubt that with some little cost and trouble — and to keep sacred the rights of a Briton, what is money, what is toil? — I can produce the very men; the owner of the duck — the carpenter, the owner of the handsaw," and Jack already looked big with anticipated triumph.

"Ha! yes — very likely;" said Mr. Crane, "but unfortunately, by the course adopted by the plaintiff, we shall not be allowed to produce witnesses." It was

in vain that the solicitor sought to impress this fact on Runnymede; our unsophisticated hero quitted the office of his adviser, strong in the ignorance of his prejudice, and fully determined on the pursuit of truth.

CHAPTER V.

It was nearly noon when Jack Runnymede stood before the house of the proprietor of a London theatre; of the gentleman discovered to be the last employer of the carpenter. Jack ascended the steps, and knocked at the door. Ere the knock was answered, Jack had time to consider the brief dialogue of two persons on the pavement, a few yards from him.

"Well, Snowden, are you engaged for next season?" was a question put to a rotund person, with a very satisfied set of features.

"No — no; nor I don't mean to apply. I — the fact is — I shall not demean myself by making the first overtures," said Snowden.

"You won't apply?" said the somewhat astonished querist.

"Certainly not — most assuredly not. At least, this — this is all I will do — nothing more — nothing more. If I go up three steps to Mr. Trapp's door" — Trapp was the name of the proprietor — "Trapp himself must, and shall, come down the other three to me."

Jack counted the steps — whereof he stood upon the topmost — and found them six. The door opened,

Jack was shown into a room, and his name promised to be taken to Mr. Trapp, who that morning met a more than usually crowded levee. Either Jack's ears were extraordinary long and sensitive — either the wainscot was of the thinnest — or the speakers more than commonly high and animated in their tones, for Runnymede, at first very unwillingly, overheard the whole of the conversation.

"What, Madam! Wear a cross as *Mandane!* A Persian princess! Never yet has the public beheld such a contradiction — a contradiction, Ma'am."

"That may be, Sir, — very likely; but public taste is much altered;" said the *prima donna.* "Either I am permitted to wear my diamond cross and rosary in Mandane, or I quit the theatre."

"You may introduce the ballad, — yes, you may sing *Wapping Old Stairs* in 'Artaxerxes,' if you please; but I do assure you" —

"Very well — very well, the ballad is one point; but you must allow the cross. I should like to know, what is the use of having diamonds, if one isn't to wear them?" asked the lady.

"But don't you perceive, Madam, that to wear a rosary in the time of Artaxerxes," — the critics had recently questioned the propriety of the act — "don't you perceive?" —

"It 's no use talking, Mr. Trapp; for the last time I tell you, either I wear my diamond rosary and cross in whatever part I please, or I quit the theatre. Another time, I 'll secure the privilege by having it put

in my articles." And so determining, the lady left the vanquished proprietor.

"Well, Sir," said Trapp, in a very altered tone; and Runnymede at first thought the gentleman spoke to some intrusive cur; "well, Sir, you must write us another comedy."

"Really, Mr. Trapp, with my other duties, it is impossible that I can compose so elaborate a work as a comedy," said the author; for it was a dramatist, and not a dog.

"Impossible, Sir! And why — why not?" asked the proprietor.

"You must allow, Sir, that my labours as a manager require that I should be here nearly every morning from ten at noon to twelve at night?"

"Very true, Sir — I know it," said the acquiescing Trapp.

"And that, Sir, every day of the week — you grant that?"

"Certainly — of course;" accorded the proprietor.

"Then, Sir, how is it possible," asked the author, "with my time so engaged — I ask you, how is it possible that I can write a comedy?"

"How is it possible," retorted Trapp in a tone of amazement, "why, Sir, hav'n't you your Sundays?"

It was evident that the dramatist had not another word to say in defence of his idleness; for without venturing a further reply, he quitted the apartment for the next person in waiting, who proved to be the tailor of the establishment.

"Well, Spangle, and what do you want?" was the question.

"I'm come, Sir, if you please, about the new gaberdine," replied the tailor.

"About what?"

"The new dress for Mr. Trout's *Shylock*."

"Oh! well, let me see — why, *Shylock* was always played in" —

"Yes, Sir, I know — and we have the stock dress in the wardrobe, Sir; but Mr. Trout won't have it on any account. He says, the character of Shylock has been quite misunderstood because played in black; he says that, in fact, Shylock was a very decent sort of person until he grew wicked; that, indeed, he means well, but people won't let him do what's right; and all this he intends to convey to the audience by means of the colour of his gaberdine, — and therefore, he says that he won't play Shylock in black, but he must have a dress of a — a benevolent colour."

"A benevolent colour," said Trapp; "well, I suppose, Spangle, you must get it — a benevolent colour — yes, you may get it."

Mr. Trout in his choice of a benevolent hue, possibly received his theory of colours from Sir Antony Shirley, who in his travels in Persia, says, "The king's disposition is noted by his apparel which he wears that day: for that day which he weareth black, he is commonly melancholy and civil; if he wear white, or green, or yellow, or any other light colour, he is

commonly merry; but when he weareth red, then all the court is afraid of him, for he will be sure to kill somebody that day; I have oft-times noted it." Would we could make known to the reader the hue of benevolence; whether of one colour, or colours intermingled! As, however, Mr. Trout noticed extraordinary contradictions in the character of Shylock, perhaps — we might in vain search a file of papers for the discovery — perhaps, he played Shylock in a harlequin's jacket.

Jack sat with extraordinary patience, expecting every minute to be called in, but every minute disappointed. "Oh, John!" and Mr. Trapp spoke to his footman, "has the messenger returned from Mr. Pastely?"

"Yes, Sir — half-an-hour ago, Sir."

"And has he written the last act of the play, yet?" enquired the manager.

"Not yet, Sir; but the messenger said he was hard at work."

"What! he saw him then?" said Trapp.

"No, Sir, he didn't see Mr. Pastely himself," replied the footman.

"Then how could he tell that he was employed on the play?"

Why, Sir, he said he knew he was, for he saw the scissor-grinder at his door;" and with this proof of Pastely's industry, Trapp was silent.

And then there sounded a confident footstep, and a voice spoke to the manager. "Well, Trapp, here

we are — another poor season. If you'd taken my advice, how business would have flourished!"

"Now, what — what would you have had me do?" asked Trapp, pettishly.

"Do! why strengthen the company. What do you think I'd do, if I had this theatre? I'd have working people — twelve men, eight women, all good;" said the speaker, in a voice like that of a cock with a cold; but, nevertheless, speaking very oracularly. "Now, mind what I'd do. I'd bind people to me by friendship — yes — I may say by friendship. I'd go to Bootle, and I'd say to Bootle, 'Bootle, what will they give you at Drury Lane?' 'So much.' 'Very well, Bootle, I'll give you more!' Then I'd go to Simcox, and I would say, 'Simcox, what will they give you at Drury Lane?' 'So much.' 'Very well, Simcox, I'll give you more!'" And thus the speaker ran through the twelve men and eight women, "all good," putting to each man and each woman the like query of, "What will they give you?" and replying thereto, "Very well, I'll give you more." When he had despatched the whole twenty, for he did not spare poor Trapp a single case, he summed up thus; "Yes, ladies and gentlemen, I'll give you more — more — more than you can get anywhere else, and so I have every faith in your devotion to your art, but on these terms you will come to me *con amore*!"

"Well, perhaps they might," answered Trapp, musingly.

"And now about the new farce?" asked the actor.

"No, the farce next week," said Trapp.

Of course it has been altered according to my directions? I must have all the jokes of Prigly; the two bailiffs must be cut out, as they weaken my scene; the old woman must be reduced to lines, saving the best for me; the escape through the practicable fire-screen belongs, in fact, to my part, and all the spice of the Jew Barabbas can only come from my mouth."

"I have given Pastely the necessary directions, and, of course, he will abide by them," said Trapp.

And then a sudden rush of ladies and gentlemen, convoked to a "reading" in the parlour of the manager, kept Jack fixed to his seat. At intervals, three or four carriages drove up to the doors, conveying the principal artists to assist at the ceremony. The piece about to be read was "The Beggar's Opera."

Immortal John Gay! He did not snip life as young ladies were wont to snip watch-papers, after what pattern they would; he simpered away nothing of its reality into conventual no-meaning. He made not mere filagree of literature; and choosing a prison-yard for his arena, he never thought to plant thyme there for bees, or pansies "freaked with jet" for the button-holes of the holiday-making felons. Look at *Peachem* and *Lockit;* a brace of social ogres. *Peachem*, with a lacker of good-breeding upon him; *Lockit*, begrimed with the dirt and damps of a prison. All *Peachem's* views of life have been taken from high ground, and high examples. We could swear he had been, in early life, valet to a statesman. *Lockit*, on

the other hand, is a fellow risen from under-turnkey. When *Mrs. Peachem*, unconsciously "meddling in matters of death," insinuates compassion for the doomed *Bob Booty*, her husband, resolved upon a "decent execution," observing, with an elegant sophism far beyond his sphere — "No gentleman is ever looked upon the worse for killing a man in his own defence; and, if business cannot be carried on without it, what would you do?" Again, his maxims on play; "The man that purposes to get money by play, should have the education of a fine gentleman, and be trained up to it from his youth." Next, of what he considers the value and purpose of his child; "My daughter to me, should be like a court-lady to a minister of state, a key to the whole gang." You hear nothing of this from *Lockit;* he could as soon speak Arabic: He is cold, venal, brutal, from the coarsest sense of self-interest; *Peachem*, has the taint of high society. He has been behind the curtain, and seen the wires. All he does, as keeper of a gaol for felons, as the go-between, the patron and betrayer of thieves, is but a repetition of what he has seen elsewhere — the translation of the fine words of high life into the slang of Newgate. The cold, murderous look with which he meets *Macheath*, his son-in-law, after his betrayal by *Jenny Diver*, is but the "pale reflex" of the light of cabinets of his time. And *Peachem's* wife, how worthy of him! Quite "bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh." It is clear she has, in former days, been the trull of two or three lords, and at length taken for a

good round sum by her present partner. Her half advocacy of *Polly;* her plea for the tyranny of love, with the loose-hung tongue and rolling eyes of a Covent-Garden Venus, and that most candid avowal, "Well, Polly, as far as one woman can forgive another, I forgive thee," assure us of her interchange of sentiment with *Peachem;* and that "not being married," the two have long lived "comfortably together." And then, *Polly!* What a beautiful vindication is she of the purity of woman's nature — of the simplicity of truth — of its triumph over circumstance. *Polly* is a flower blooming in the chinks of Newgate stones. "The Beggar's Opera" is a terse, vivid essay on men and manners. All its characters are real flesh and blood, and the sentiments they utter, good or bad, the coin which passes current in the world. It is a book for all men of all grades; from the courtier in his levee-coat, to the felon in his chains.

The ladies and gentlemen had assembled to read "The Beggar's Opera" for impurities: they were convoked to present to the moral world, a family edition of John Gay. The proprietor, wisely mistrusting his own unassisted powers of mutilation, had called about him the several severe and acute minds to be found in his company; and doubted not that, under the chastening fire of such an assembly, naughty John Gay would come out bright and pure as newly-minted gold. The reading was about to commence, when a lady — she was to represent *Captain Macheath* in a blue frock coat, white trousers, round hat, and straw-

coloured kid gloves — requested that the ceremony might be deferred until the arrival of her mamma, who had promised to attend to point out to her the improper passages. At the instant, carriage wheels were heard — the knocker sounded — there was a rustling of silk in the passage — a sudden smell of musk — and, enter the mamma of Captain Macheath.

The reading began, and — as the parties read from an already purified text — no objections were made to the author, until *Mrs. Peachem* came to —

"What business hath he to keep company with lords and gentlemen? he should leave them to prey upon one another."

On this, Mr. Trapp with a knowing elevation of shoulder and earnest screw of the head, ordered the passage to be expunged, as it would be offensive to his boxes. Whereupon the prompter drew his quill across the passage.

Next, *Mrs. Peachem* — who had played the singing old women for thirty years, and wore at her neck the portrait of a gentleman, her first deceiving love, in the costume of George the Second — suggested purification. Could she say such things as these? —

"She loves to imitate fine ladies, and she may only allow the captain liberties in the view of interest." And again — "All men are thieves in love, and like a woman the better for being another's property."

At this there was a general expression of disgust. *Captain Macheath* looked at the flies on the ceiling; *Macheath's* mamma suddenly shifted herself with a

gesture of loathing; *Mrs. Peachem* glanced at the portrait of her first love in the costume of George the Second; and Trapp, again lifting his shoulder and screwing his head, passed sentence — "Mark it out," and out it went. "Let us go on," said Trapp, and the reading proceeded to the speech of Polly: —

"I know as well as any of the fine ladies how to make the most of myself, and of my man, too. A woman knows how to be mercenary, though she hath never been at court or at an assembly; we have it in our natures, papa: if I allow Captain Macheath some trifling liberties, I have this watch and other visible marks of his favour to show for it. A girl who cannot grant some things, and refuse what is most material, will make but a poor hand of her beauty, and soon be thrown upon the common."

Captain Macheath observed to *Polly*, — "Of course, my dear, you 'll never say that?"

"Certainly not, my child," said the mamma of the captain.

"No, dear; you had better come to the song *Virgins are like the fair flower* at once," advised *Mrs. Peachem*, and so it was determined. The next pause was at the speech of *Mrs. Peachem:* —

"If it had been only an intrigue with the fellow, why the very best families have excused and huddled up a thing of that sort; 't is marriage, husband, that makes it a blemish."

"Now, Sir," said the lady with the portrait of her first lover, "you can never expect me to speak that?"

"Cut it out," said Trapp, the delicate and inexorable Trapp — "cut it out," and thus they proceeded cutting out Gay, reviewed as poor Quellenec — (see

Bayle) — was reviewed by the ladies of the Louvre.

At length, the reading was got through; John Gay was made fit for decent society. The company rose, and were about to leave, when Mr. Trapp observed to the ladies, — "Oh, about the dresses for the new piece? Is Mrs. Sleeve here, John?"

"I 've been to the wardrobe, Sir, and she 's coming down, directly," and ere the words were well out, Mrs. Sleeve presented herself.

"Now, Mrs. Sleeve," said Trapp, "you will take the orders of the ladies for their dresses, and mind and be very particular with the fleshings." Mrs. Sleeve answered with a curtsey the command, and *Captain Macheath*, the *Polly*, and, indeed, all the ladies who had assisted at the purification of John Gay, went to get themselves measured for silk flesh-coloured legs and blue satin slips for a piece of mythology.

"Where, where," asked Trapp, somewhat angrily, "where is Mrs. Centipede? we must arrange about herself and the Cupids."

"Heaven lies about us in our infancy," saith the poet. Mrs. Centipede, the dancer, was evidently of the poet's opinion — hence she always had on hire some threescore children from two to six years old; by virtue of their years, the tuition of their mistress, white muslin frocks, and buckram wings with foil-paper spots, angels of the most agile order. It was a delightful, a touching sight, to see Mrs. Centipede in the midst of her whole sixty, twisting, turning; she

like a graceful humming-top, surrounded by little tops with pegs. Mrs. Centipede was an excellent creature; every Sunday she was to be seen at some church. A rival dancer said with a sneer, she attended there to bespeak her pupils as they were brought to be christened: and in many instances, three days after they were short-coated, they could dance. Happy! guileless little creatures! promoted from the vulgarity of mortal childhood to spirits of a heavenly order! Not banished to bed with the rooks and the lambs, but kept awake, curled and painted, to receive at midnight the cheers and loud applause of an adult, discerning public!

How about my dress for Venus?" asked Mrs. Centipede in a low voice of Mrs. Sleeve, as the dancer slided into the apartment.

"For Venus!" Now Mrs. Centipede was thin and gaunt; her face had something of the gipsy caste, rigidly marked: her hair, which she wore in profusion, was coal-black; and her eyes, large and rolling, were of the like colour. They had a restless action, as if continually watching the evolutions of her sixty pupils. In her manner, albeit she was Bermondsey born, there was a kind of French polish; how obtained, we know not; though it was once stated by a lady who kept a rival academy, that Mrs. Centipede's first lover was the French Hercules, and won her virgin heart by pulling successfully against two horses.

"The dress for Venus?" said Mrs. Sleeve, "Oh, Mr. Trapp has ordered that to be entirely new."

"Very well," said Mrs. Centipede, with great meekness, — "and for the wings for the children, why, I think old gauze will be as good as any;" saying which, she glided like a ghost away.

"Well, Trapp, have you thought anything more of that matter?" asked a young gentleman, having somewhat unceremoniously lounged into the presence of the proprietor.

"What matter?" interrogated Trapp.

"The — the girl?" answered the young gentleman, with easy self-possession.

"Oh! very true, my lord; the young lady has, I have no doubt, considerable talent."

"Upon my life, Mr. Trapp," said the young gentleman, "I do think she's equal to anything;" and the speaker smoothed down a moustache, like a bit of mole-skin. "I've known the young lady some time, and, though I don't pretend to know much about plays — the fact is, you begin so devilish early — yet she has very fine eyes."

"Very fine eyes, my lord," and Trapp twisted his head in admiration.

"And her foot, and ankle — upon my honour, I do think in some of your things, Trapp — in what at the club we call leg pieces," —

"Leg pieces! ha! ha! capital, your lordship — capital."

"I do think she'd make a good show. I have no interest in the girl, at all — none, I assure you —

she's a pet, yes, I may say, a pet of my sisters, and so I — I thought I'd drive down to you."

"I'm sure, I'm very much obliged to your lordship. Ha! if we only had a few more such patrons of the drama!" and Trapp sighed.

"You know, Trapp, that is, understand — I shall often come to the house; therefore as I shall want a seat, — why — yes — I may say, whatever you give the girl in salary, I'll pay you again in private boxes."

"Your lordship is very good. The young lady can dance?"

"Like St. Vitus. — Mrs. Centipede had her when she was very young. Now, understand, Trapp, it's a bargain — the engagement and the private box." Saying this, his lordship walked away, shown out by the proprietor.

And all this time, where was Runnymede? He continued to sit with laudable patience in the back room. For a time, he was an interested listener to the trial of Gay, but his vigilance relaxed, and at length he sank into a deep sleep.

"I'm sure, Sir — I'm very sorry — I beg your pardon — but I'd forgot you was here," said John, waking him.

"Well — never mind; now, I hope I can see Mr. Trapp?"

"Mr. Trapp, Sir — I'm very sorry — but" —

"But what?" asked Runnymede, somewhat soured.

"The truth is, Mr. Trapp had ordered the horses — he felt himself a little better — and so, shortly after the reading, Mr. Trapp went out."

"Out?" exclaimed Runnymede.

"Out," repeated John.

CHAPTER VI.

"I HAVE found him — I have found him at last!" exclaimed Jack Runnymede to Earwig, his diligent companion in the pursuit of truth. It was even so; disappointed of an interview with the courteous Mr. Trapp, Jack applied to the porter at the stage-door, from whom he obtained a clue, which, being diligently followed for many days, led him at length to the carpenter. "Now, now our evidence is complete," and Jack's face shone with satisfaction — "now, what can withstand the justice of our cause?" Mr. Crane looked graver and graver, assuring the unsophisticated defendant that, however laudable his endeavours, they were made wholly inapplicable to the case, by the proceeding of the plaintiff. At this Runnymede would smile incredulously, and with invincible complacency observe, — "But I tell you, my dear Sir, I have proof, Sir — proof — proof."

"Very true, Mr. Runnymede: I have no doubt of it; and very praiseworthy it is of you to have gone to so much cost and trouble for the sake of truth; but when truth can be of no use," —

"No use!" exclaimed Runnymede.

"We may," continued the placid Crane, "pay too dearly for it, if only to keep it by us."

"Impossible — quite impossible; truth, Sir — truth is" —

"Mr. Runnymede," said Crane, interrupting Jack in his fervent praise of truth, "I envy your simplicity. You are an excellent man, Mr. Runnymede; but if I may say it, a little too romantic. This, Sir — the Lord help us! is a wicked world we live in. Perhaps it 's right it should be so; but for my part, I think it the duty of a Christian always to take things as they come."

"Especially," observed Earwig — "especially, when the things happen to bring their own recommendation."

"But, Mr. Crane, I tell you, I have the witnesses. I have the man who lost the ducks, the man who was robbed of the handsaw and chisel; the copy of the commitment of John Chuff, alias Arthur Allwork, — and what is more — I have the late turnkey of the county gaol, who — if the plaintiff should endeavour to shelter his iniquity under his 'alias,' — is ready to swear to his identity. And now, Mr. Crane, I ask you as a lawyer and a Christian, whether anything can defeat the justice of my case? What, Sir, — as an Englishman dignified by Magna Charta I ask it — what can be stronger than truth?"

"Process by criminal information," answered Crane. "But we shall see, Mr. Runnymede — we shall see.

Nothing is certain in this world — and more especially in that part of it, known as Westminster Hall."

"Of course, you would like to see the witnesses?" asked Jack, and he rubbed his hands, as if about to invite Crane to a great treat.

"Just as you please; it can do no harm. Are they in London?"

"Are they in London!" echoed Runnymede. "Mr. Crane, this is a cause in which I would spend the last farthing — shed the last drop of my blood."

"The law is much obliged to you," said Mr. Crane.

"We have had our Hampdens and our Pyms, and our Eliots, to little purpose, if the birthright of" —

"But you spoke of the witnesses, Mr. Runnymede? You say you can produce them?" interrupted the attorney.

"I can, Mr. Crane. It has cost me much trouble — much expense — but, Sir, I would have walked overland to Crim Tartary in such a cause. I have the witnesses — have them safe, Mr. Crane, safe," cried Jack, with a triumphant look. "I have taken apartments for them. Nobody save my dear friend Earwig and myself can get at 'em. If they go out, I accompany them — if they stay at home, I lock 'em up. You see, Mr. Crane, there can be no tampering — no tampering. Ha! ha!"

"Very vigilant — very circumspect," said Crane. "You ought to gain the cause, Mr. Runnymede."

"Ought! Must!" exclaimed Jack, very energetically. "Will you dine with me to-day?"

"Not to-day. The truth is, I — I have promised Mrs. Crane to accompany her to the consecration of a chapel in our neighbourhood. But — if you'll promise to keep early hours — I'll sup with you."

"And then," said Runnymede, with a gracious smile, and laying his hand upon the attorney's shoulder, "then you shall see the witnesses."

In the evening, Mr. Crane was punctual at the new lodgings of our hero; but to the surprise of the attorney, learned that Mr. Runnymede and his friends were not at home. Earwig, however, was deputed by Jack to receive Mr. Crane, and assure him of the speedy arrival of his client.

"Mr. Runnymede," observed the attorney, as he warmed himself by Jack's fire, "is a very foolish man."

"Very," replied Jack's "dear friend Earwig."

"This affair will cost him some money — will put him to some inconvenience," said the placid lawyer. "A fine of five hundred, and I suppose not less than six months' imprisonment," rejoined Earwig.

"That's about it," answered Crane; "and then the expenses will be something."

"The Runnymedes have always been fools," observed Earwig. "Why, there was Jack's father — I could tell you things about him, that" —

Unfortunately for Mr. Earwig's reputation as a story-teller, a sudden knocking at the door, checked him in his theme, for he immediately exclaimed, "Here he is — witnesses and all!"

"Oh! I suppose he has been for them?" said Crane.

"Been for them? Bless you! they live here. The fact is, your excellent and stupid client" —

But at this moment the door opened, and the first witness presented himself. He was a tall, burly man, with large unmeaning features. His nose had been cut in two in some Arcadian fray, which injury added nothing to the agreeableness of his visage, or the harmony of his voice. He bobbed his head at Crane and Earwig, and sat down in silence. The example was followed by an elderly man, with a rustic, care-worn look, who seated himself, smoothing his grey hair with his rough hand. "Servant, gentlemen," said a third witness, ranging himself with the others.

"Hope you hav'n't waited?" cried Runnymede, running in, and taking both hands of Crane. "But the fact is, the good people here had not been out for two days, and as I wouldn't have them moped, I took them all to see the wild beasts."

"How very kind of you!" exclaimed Crane.

"Never was a kinder gentleman in this world," cried one of the witnesses, made impatient with gratitude.

"Should ha' died but for him, and never know'd what an elephant war like," said another.

"Something like a gentleman," asseverated the man with the injured nose, "took us to Bedlam last Monday."

"Yes, we 've wanted for nothin' since we 've been here," said a bouncing country wench, entering with a child in her arms.

"And, pray, Mr. Runnymede," began Crane, "am I to understand that these are?" —

"Very right," cried Jack, "first business, then supper. These good people are my witnesses. This good man's name is" —

"Giles Hurdle," said the old rustic, rising, and still smoothing his hair.

"Giles Hurdle," continued Jack; "this good man was the owner of the two ducks" —

"Duck and a drake," was the correction of Giles.

"They 're all the same" — Giles shook his head — "quite the same," insisted Jack. "The ducks stolen by Chuff."

"I could swear it through three bibles," exclaimed old Giles.

"A valuable witness, Mr. Runnymede, if — if — but, however, proceed," said Crane.

"And this good man is Joseph Squarewise, the carpenter, who lost the handsaw and the chisel," said Jack, and the carpenter bowed a silent affirmative. "And this good person's name," —

"My name," said the man with the damaged feature, "is Mark Griggers. I was turnkey three years at Chelmsford gaol, and had the custody of John Chuff."

"There — there — there, Mr. Crane, — can any-

thing be more satisfactory?" asked Runnymede, with glistening eyes.

"And who," inquired Crane, evading an answer, "who may this lady be?"

"Mr. Griggers' daughter, Sir," said the girl, with a curtsey, "and this is my little boy."

"And all witnesses?" inquired the attorney, with a malicious smile.

"No — not the young woman; only the fact is, Mr. Griggers had promised to give her a trip some day to London, and" —

"And all things considered," said the late turnkey, "I thought no time could be like the time present."

"I 'm only so sorry," cried Mr. Griggers' daughter, "that baby 's christened."

"Why, my good woman? May I ask why?" inquired the attorney.

"Because, I 'm the greatest sinner as is alive," — and the mother looked gratefully towards Runnymede, — "if I wouldn't ha' called it arter that gentleman. He deserves no less, that 's what he doesn't. Would you think it, Sir, he 's bought baby this black hat and feathers? And if he gets the cause — and the Lord send he may! tho' I know nothing about it — if he gets the cause, I know he 'll gi' baby a lace cap."

"And pray, Mr. Giles Hurdle, what may you think of London?" asked Crane, in the way of self-amusement.

"Why, Sir, I doan't know," answered Giles; "but I do think all but lawyers be a pack o' rogues."

"Indeed! And for the lawyers, Mr. Giles?"

"Why for them, I be sure they be," said Hurdle.

"He 'll make a remarkably intelligent witness," said Earwig confidentially to Crane.

"You were never before in London, I presume, Mr. Griggers? Ha! so it struck me. What do you think of it?" asked the attorney.

"For London," replied the turnkey, "I don't think so much of it."

"Sorry for that," observed Mr. Crane. "Very sorry."

"And as for Tyburn," continued the turnkey, with a melancholy look — "why it quite disappointed me."

"And Mr. Squarewise, what" —

"The supper's ready, Sir," was the sudden announcement of the servant.

"Ha!" exclaimed the turnkey's daughter, "and Dick isn't come back. Kept out by that Jonathan!"

"This way, Mr. Crane," said Runnymede, showing him from the room. "We shall find our supper here;" and Jack led the attorney, followed by Earwig, into another apartment, the witnesses being left to feast by themselves.

"What do you think of the girl, Mr. Crane?" asked Earwig, winking and nodding his head at Runnymede. "Jack can choose a witness."

"Mr. Earwig," replied Crane with sudden gravity, "Mr. Earwig — I think the — that is, I — I am a married man."

"Upon *my* life! I insist Earwig, I" — and Jack coloured to the brows at the jocular insinuation of his bosom friend — "I entreat that you give over such levity. The girl is the daughter of the most important witness. Her husband is with her, and" —

"He is? What! is he a witness too?" inquired Crane.

"Not at all; only as Griggers would have his daughter with him — she of course," said Jack, "couldn't leave her husband, who insisted upon bringing his cousin."

"Well, I meant nothing — 'pon my honour, no; but really, Mr. Crane, as a man who knows something, don't you think Jack has a fine taste in ribands? How well blue becomes the wench, doesn't it?" asked Earwig.

Mr. Crane almost laid down his knife and fork, and with increased solemnity assured Mr. Earwig that he was a married man.

"What a strange fellow you are!" said the sensitive Runnymede. "As for those ribands, Mr. Crane, the fact is, I — I thought I could do no less than put the witnesses into decent attire."

"I thought they were very smart for their condition," said Crane. "Then you have fitted them out?"

"It cost me very little," replied Runnymede, "and as they were to give evidence for me in a court of justice, why, when I was about it, a gown and a few yards of riband" —

"And a hat and feathers for baby," added Earwig, staring at Crane.

"Didn't make much difference," said Runnymede.

"Well," — and for the second time Mr. Crane made the declaration — "you ought to win the cause."

"I shall win it," cried Jack. "By the way, I hav'n't shown you a copy of the commitment of that rascal Chuff, alias Allwork. Here it is!" and Jack produced the document, his eyes glistening like the eyes of a bride at nuptial diamonds, as he read it. "There — what can stand against that?"

"I hope it will be received," observed Crane, "but as an honest man and Christian lawyer, I must declare my doubts."

"Aye, you are perhaps right to express yourself cautiously," said Runnymede. "And here — here 's his conviction."

"What! for the ducks?" asked the lawyer.

"No. The fact is, the case for the ducks didn't stand; but he stole them for all that. Hurdle 's ready to take his oath to it."

"Didn't stand! Why not?" inquired Crane. "Wasn't it proved?"

"Proved, beyond the slightest doubt; only the prisoner had the advantage of a slight mistake," said Runnymede.

"What was it?" asked the attorney, rubbing his hands, and smiling at the anticipation of a flaw.

"Why, the indictment was for stealing two ducks; but it was proved by the cross-examination for the prisoner, that one of the birds was a drake."

"Then of course they could not convict," exclaimed Crane.

"No: but he committed the robbery for all that," answered Jack.

"What a lucky escape!" cried the lawyer, tickled by the good fortune of the prisoner. "What a lucky escape!" *

"But he was a thief for all that," repeated Runnymede, who had no professional taste for chicane to gratify.

"Yes, but if the drake was not admitted against him, my dear Mr. Runnymede — if as I say the drake was not admitted against him," —

"He stole it," Runnymede averred for the third time, "he stole it for all that." Crane shook his head. "But say nothing of the ducks," cried Jack with animation, "I can go upon the saw — I can stand upon the chisel."

"Let us hope the best," said the pious attorney, "let us hope you may stand upon the chisel."

* See *Sessions' Reports*, 1836, for a similiar case.

CHAPTER VII.

THE trial — the important trial — was set down to be heard, though, for the sake of Runnymede's witnesses, we are happy to state not before sufficient time had been afforded them to see, under the kind auspices of the defendant, all the sights of the metropolis. As the day approached, Mr. Crane very prudently attempted to prepare his client for the worst; still, we regret to say, with little success, Jack deeming failure impossible. It was in vain that the attorney spoke of forms of court, of the peculiarity of the law of libel — Jack replied to all these intimations with an unbelieving laugh. "There might have been cases," Jack would allow, "which failed from want of evidence; but in a case like his, in which truth was as clear as the light of heaven, to fail was impossible."

The morning came, and Jack Runnymede rose as to his wedding.

As he rode towards Westminster Hall, accompanied by his witnesses, he felt himself an invulnerable champion in the cause of truth. Saint George did not ride out to fight the dragon with greater confidence, with keener ardour for the fray, than swelled the bosom of Jack Runnymede on his meditated destruction of a false attorney.

With the sweetest smile upon his face, and with the airiest step, our hero entered the court. Many friends nodded to him; he acknowledged the greeting

with a new smile, and then his eye falling upon Chuff, alias Allwork, he looked as he would have withered him in a blaze of indignation. Mr. Allwork, indulged himself with a slight cough — rubbed his hands — and judged from his manner, turned to whisper something in the ear of his counsel.

The judge took his seat — the jury were sworn. Runnymede had gazed intently at them, feeling assured that he had never beheld gathered together twelve such honest looking men. The cause was begun; for a full account of which we refer the reader to the law reports.

The libel was proved; and Runnymede's counsel, not being permitted to justify the statements of Runnymede by means of witnesses, contented himself with flourishing before the eyes of the libelled man, the copy of his committal to Chelmsford gaol; and, at the pressing request of the astonished Runnymede, pointing out the turnkey in the person of Mark Griggers, waiting in the body of the court, to be examined. Allwork threw a look at his late keeper, but showed no signs of previous acquaintance. The counsel next touched upon the presence of the owner of certain ducks — upon the ease with which one Joseph Squarewise, a carpenter, might be produced to speak to a certain saw and chisel; and ended his address with a most eloquent appeal to the love of truth on the part of the jury, who under the direction of the judge, found John Runnymede guilty of a libel against Arthur Allwork. When the foreman delivered the verdict, a

female in the gallery exclaimed, — "There goes the lace cap of poor baby!" Jack looked up, — and whilst the court rang with laughter, to which, by the way, Mr. Crane contributed more than his due share — beheld the melancholy face of the turnkey's daughter.

"I told you how it would happen," said Crane to Runnymede. — "You see — we 've lost it."

"Lost it! it 's impossible that with my witnesses ready — with so strong a case" —

"An excellent case," observed a legal gentleman, "never heard a better case, if — if you had been allowed to prove it."

"And pray — what — what remains now?" asked Runnymede, all astonishment.

"Nothing — but" — and Crane stroked his chin, and stared in Jack's losing countenance.

"But what? — speak out, Mr. Crane! Let me know what remains to be done," exclaimed Runnymede.

"Nothing more than this: you 'll be brought up for judgment."

"It can't be!" cried the unbelieving victim. "Judgment! and what — what follows, then?"

"Why, it 's a very flagrant case," said Crane.

"It is, indeed," said Runnymede.

"To call a man a thief — and a perjurer; it 's a serious matter, Mr. Runnymede," observed the attorney.

"But it 's the truth, Sir — the truth — the truth!" raved our hero.

"That may be — I don't dispute it; but you see, Mr. Runnymede, truth in cases such as this is like green peas in winter; if you will indulge in a luxury, you must pay for it. Now, let me advise you, — this is an ugly business — therefore, let me advise you to make the best of it," was the counsel of Mr. Crane as he walked arm-in-arm with Runnymede from Westminster Hall, the unappropriated witnesses Hurdle, Squarewise, Griggers, with his daughter, her husband and his cousin, slowly following.

"I wish to make the best of it," said Runnymede, "that has been my wish throughout."

"Well said," observed Crane. "So, authorise me to treat with Mr. Allwork — after all, he's not so unreasonable a gentleman."

"Gentleman! a thief — a perjurer — a — gentleman, indeed!" exclaimed Runnymede in uncontrolled rage.

"You mustn't say these things; as your lawyer, and as a Christian, I say you mustn't. Now, listen; I'll make an offer to him, and, perhaps, he'll be satisfied with a fair sum of money and an apology."

"An apology! Do you think me a Hottentot, Mr. Crane? — a barbarian — a beast? An apology — and from a truth-telling Briton? No, Sir! I wonder that the departed great, gathered there" — and Runnymede stretched his arm towards the Abbey — "do not move in their tombs at what is perpetrated *there*," and Jack violently flung his arm from Westminster Abbey to Westminster Hall.

"If you are brought up for judgment," said Mr. Crane, unmoved by the energy of his client, "I won't answer for the term of imprisonment."

"Imprison me! No — impossible. I reverence the laws, and I can't believe it — imprison me! If such an outrage were committed, do you think I have no remedy? Yes, Sir — yes; I have a remedy — for, thank God! I'm an Englishman."

Runnymede, deaf to the voice of his adviser, remained unshaken in his sense of security. "It was enough that Allwork had, by some unaccountable means, obtained a verdict: he would not attempt to push his triumph farther. No — scoundrel as he was — he could not be so utterly lost to shame." Such was the belief of our hero when, after the lapse of some weeks, he was briefly desired by Mr. Crane to hold himself in readiness to receive judgment.

"It can't be — it 's impossible," exclaimed Runnymede. "However, I'll attend the court — of course I'll appear — but he never can be so infamous — the law can't allow it;" and with this belief John Runnymede appeared before the judge, who sentenced him to pay a fine of five hundred pounds, with the further punishment of eight months' imprisonment.

"And for writing the truth?" cried Runnymede, quite aghast.

"A very gross case of libel," observed a barrister to half a dozen professional friends.

"Very flagrant — very gross, indeed," replied five of the six.

Jack Runnymede was conducted from the court by the officer whose painful duty it was to see the libeller safely bestowed in one of his Majesty's prisons. Jack, having seated himself in the coach, ventured to ask his companion "If he had ever known such an atrocious business?"

"Very common, Sir," replied the officer; "but yours is rather strong."

"Strong! I — it's so atrocious I can hardly believe it," said Runnymede.

"Ha! Sir, very few words in such a matter cost a good deal of money — fewer words than go to an ounce."

"But it's notorious — the rascal is known to be a thief and a perjurer," cried Jack.

"What! Mr. Allwork? To be sure he is, Sir; and that made it so very simple of you to call him so," observed the astute officer.

"But the business sha'n't stop here — no, I'm determined it sha'n't — I" —

"We 're very near home, Sir," said the officer, endeavouring to soothe his charge.

"I should be a traitor to my country — to myself, if I remained quiet."

"You may be very comfortable where you 're going — with money, Sir, everything at the best."

"There is the right of petitioning left me," cried nnymede.

"You can have a room to yourself," said the officer.

"And with good spirits," — exclaimed Jack.

"Sorry to say, Sir, no spirits allowed; that is, if known: but plenty of wine," was the intelligence of the officer.

"You mistake, my friend. What I meant to say was, that, as a Briton, I had the right of petition."

"To be sure, Sir."

"That, therefore, I would address parliament."

"Can't do better, Sir — it will help over the time, with rackets."

"Thank heaven! there 's Magna Charta," cried Runnymede.

"And there 's the Bench," said the officer, and the coach stopped at the prison gate.

Runnymede entered the lobby, and was delivered to the keeper. "Thank God! I 'm an Englishman," cried Jack, as he looked around, and saw himself in the court-yard of the prison.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE fine inflicted upon Runnymede for his wicked and malicious libel on Arthur Allwork was the least punishment. There were certain expenses which, combined with the disorder of his affairs in consequence of his imprisonment, made it not unlikely that, Englishman as he was, Jack Runnymede might grow grey

in captivity in an English gaol, despite the blessings of Magna Charta.

"They can't keep us here — you may take my word for it, they can't," Runnymede would avow again and again to his fellow prisoners for debt, the marshal of the gaol, oddly enough, holding them all the while. "There 's Magna Charta — and, yes, thank God! we 're Englishmen!" And this was, one day, the proud declaration of Jack to a miserable, ragged wretch, a three years' prisoner for a debt of five and forty shillings.

"What 's Magna Charta?" asked the squalid debtor.

"The glory of Britons; it gives us our liberty," exclaimed Runnymede.

"I wish I could get some of it," said the prisoner. "Why don't you try it yourself? — How 's it to be had, in bottles?" asked the fellow, with a grin. "If it is, I suppose that 's why it 's stopped at the gate. Magna Charta!" roared the man, with a horrid laugh.

"My friend," said Runnymede, "respect the laws — remember that" —

"Oh, of course — I must respect the laws. Look at my rags! — ha! ha! feel my soft hands — hands I wish to make hard with work, — but the laws make me take my leisure here, and lounge like a gentleman."

"Is your debt heavy?" asked Runnymede.

"Why, blessings on the laws! yes. It was two pounds and odd, for physic for my dead wife; but the

laws — charming laws! made it more than ten. You can't think how a poor man, with all the world at his back — and that's load enough, my master — must love the laws, when they strike his working-tools from his hand, and send him to walk here, with his fists in his pockets."

"And your debt was only two pounds?" asked Runnymede.

"A shilling or two over; now, it's ten and more; but then the difference is for bits of paper made by the laws, and dealt out by the lawyers."

"And there is one of the craft," cried Runnymede with some disgust, as a yellow-faced, low-browed specimen of the species crawled by.

"Yes, that's Blacklamb, the hump-backed lawyer of Clement's-inn. But bless you, Sir! I've no malice against such as he — poor vermin! not I — they can't help it. I should as soon think of blaming a snake for its rattles."

"Then where does your anger fall, if not upon the snakes?" inquired Jack, interested by the quaint earnestness of the debtor.

"Why, upon them that make it profitable to breed reptiles," answered the prisoner; and tossing his head, he abruptly walked away.

The time of Jack's imprisonment flew by, and in a week, if certain arrangements could be made, he hoped to enjoy his freedom, when — for the darling thought had never left him — he determined to obtain redress, even at the foot of the throne, for the wrongs com-

mitted upon him. His admiring country should feel proud of him as an Englishman!

We have, however, premised that new difficulties beset Runnymede. His affairs were become desperate, and his liberation was rather to be hoped than expected, even with the sacrifice of every shilling of his property.

"If such things were known to be done by the people in the moon," said Jack bitterly, as he looked over the bill of costs delivered by Crane, "what asses, what fools, what knaves, what villains, we should call them!" Jack tried to read every item, but he became heart-sick ere he had proceeded three feet down the paper. However, Mr. Candidus, Jack's real friend, stirred himself in the business, and after a month's delay, the fine and all the expenses were paid, leaving our romantic hero without a farthing.

"I 'm going — farewell," said Jack to a fellow-prisoner. "When I get out, thank God! I've the spirit of an Englishman, and can push my fortune: good bye," and Runnymede was about to quit the prison, when he was stopped at the lobby. "It 's all right — you have my discharge, you know."

"Yes — but there 's gate-fees," observed the functionary in the lobby.

"But the debt 's paid — I owe nothing," replied Jack.

"Gate-fees — or you must go back," said the man in authority; and Jack Runnymede, without blessing his stars that he was an Englishman, begged the money

of Mr. Candidus, to rescue the champion of truth from the clutches of the turnkeys.

"You never mean to tell me that I have no remedy?" said Runnymede to Candidus. "If I am an Englishman, there must be justice for me?"

"There is a remedy; but, Mr. Runnymede, by this time you ought to know that nothing in our way is to be done without expense."

"But I am determined to proceed against All-work; there has been gross perjury; I am determined" —

Mr. Candidus checked Jack's ardour, stilled his roarings for revenge, with these words, accompanied by a most benignant smile. "Mr. John Runnymede, you must know that law costs money; now, before you make an unalterable determination, had you not better put your hands in your pockets?"

There was much in the words, but there was more in the manner, of the speaker. Jack Runnymede, despite his yearnings for satisfaction — despite his strong desire to assert his rights as an Englishman — felt the force of the appeal. Without another word, he wished Mr. Candidus good morning, and sallied into the street.

John Runnymede stood in the highway of sumptuous London, the undone votary of truth. He turned and turned, and again stood undecided, whither to go. "Why — why was I not born a baron in the days of John?" Such was the vain and fretful question of the dinnerless Runnymede. "Why was I born in an age when public virtue is of no account? But no — it is im-

possible that my countrymen can be dead to the voice of my injuries; they must rise, as one man, to aid me; if I can but make the evil known." And then Jack thought of calling a meeting of Britons to obtain redress of his wrongs. Or — the idea particularly pleased him — if he could get up a procession of his countrymen to march, with appropriate flags, to the Houses of Parliament! He might call a meeting; yes — thank God! as an Englishman, he had that right.

No sooner had the thought possessed him, than Jack became assured of speedy satisfaction. He should be cheered — quoted by his countrymen as the brave assertor of their rights. His life would be written by a hundred glowing pens — his portrait would be carved and printed on wood — it would adorn newspapers — it would hang, with pictures of the cardinal virtues, on the walls of thousands of cottages. Thank heaven! with all his sufferings, he was still proud of his country — yes, with the right of petition, he felt that he was still an Englishman. The power of money might, for a time, be strong — but there was a moral influence which neither gold, nor rank, nor sophistry, nor tyranny itself could destroy! Jack Runnymede felt his nature sublimated by these ennobling thoughts; and his blood seemed turning to ichor, as he strode, like a giant late for dinner, onward.

Jack had resolved upon the means of action. He would exercise the prerogative of his birthright — he would call a meeting of his countrymen: he would go

armed with a petition to the senate — to that august assembly, whose benevolent ears were ever inclined to the complaint of the meanest subject; and, purified of every selfish, narrow feeling, met and meditated only for the subject's good!

With this determination, the penniless Jack Runnymede sought the house of a printer, known to him in better times. Jack, as he walked, composed the few striking sentences that, printed in gigantic type, and exposed to the public eye, would call tens of thousands of Englishmen to the place of rendezvous — where, beneath the canopy of heaven — (for what room, even could he pay for it, would be sufficiently extensive to contain the number of his hearers?) — he would detail his wrongs, and move the adoption of certain remedial measures. Yes, Jack had completed the "call" to his countrymen, and was advanced in his address. The rain fell from a November sky, but Jack, in the ardour of his purpose, felt it not, so completely was he filled with his address to a visionary multitude of tens of thousands. Thus rapt, Jack Runnymede, to the astonishment and amusement of the passengers, unconsciously committed the strangest antics. Still striking or flinging about his arms and muttering "the sanctity of the person of the subject," he sent a harmless muffin-boy into the middle of the road, — and, when he rounded a period with "universal toleration," he gave a flourish with his arm that almost knocked to the earth an inoffensive quaker. Twenty times had Jack dwelt upon "the liberty of the subject." — Again he

touched upon the glorious theme — "I say, gentlemen, the liberty of the subject cannot be violated! I say that — thanks to the blessings of Magna Charta! — the liberty of an Englishman is inviolable! Neither King, Lords, nor Commons, can lay a finger upon an Englishman, if" —

Jack had not breath to finish the sentence, for a huge hand grasped him by the collar, and a voice, harsh and deep, exclaimed, — "Messmate, we want you."

Jack Runnymede, convinced of the inviolability of the person of an Englishman, indignantly screwed himself round, when he beheld a man in a hairy cap and rough coat, not too closely buttoned to hide a cutlass and a pair of pistols. — The man, however, was not in a sanguinary mood, as he held in his right hand nothing more than a short, knotted cudgel no thicker than his arm. Besides, he was evidently a good-tempered person if not too much put upon: for he met the burning glances of Runnymede with a smile and a nod, and the heartiest assurance that "he would be nicely provided for."

"My good man," said Runnymede, "you mistake the person — you do, indeed."

"Mistake! I ax your pardon — we've been arter you this week," said the leader in the hairy cap.

"Me! I — I have not the pleasure of knowing any — any of you," and Jack, aghast, surveyed the faces of the press-gang surrounding him.

"Mayhap not," said the captain of the gang, "but

we 're never above beginning the acquaintance. You 're a lucky griffin, I can tell you."

"Lucky!" exclaimed Runnymede.

"Hav'n't you a twin-brother?" asked the captain, with well-affected interest.

"No — not at all — I assure you," said Jack, trembling.

"Well, you 're as like him as one gull 's like another. It 's only three months ago that we fell foul on him, just in this water — and, would you think it? — last Tuesday only — wasn't it Tuesday, Ben?" — and the proprietor of that name wiped his mouth, winked, and answered "Tuesday," — "only last Tuesday he hoisted his flag as port-admiral of Baffin's Bay. Now, you 're so like him — ha! ha! isn't it his very bowsprit?" and the humourist pointed at the nose of Runnymede.

"Not quite so much bowsed up," cried the critical Ben.

"Quite his run. Well, you are so like, that the Lords of the Admiralty couldn't, if they would, make you less than post-captain. Come, shake out your canvas, shipmate," added the speaker in an authoritative tone, and Runnymede, either through ignorance of the mandate, or with natural obstinacy, moved no step; when, after a very brief pause, he felt the knees of two or three of the gang behind. Here — here was an affront upon the inviolability of the British biped! Jack Runnymede felt himself almost suffocated with wrath.

"I — I tell you, my good friends," — and Jack could say no more.

"You may call us friends," said Ben, "'specially when you know what the fat of junk's like: won't you go to prayers three times in the middle-watch, for all the good we 've done you? Come, heave ahead!"

"What — what is it you want with me?" cried poor Runnymede, in despair.

"Want!" cried the wag of the gang, "want to see how you 'll float, as the devil said when he pulled the marine out of the chains."

"Stay — stay — one minute. Am I" — Jack was in agony as he put what he felt to be a vital question — "am I to understand, that you wish to press me — that you wish to drag me from my home — my?" —

"Why, you know your wife's tired on you," cried the hairy cap; "you know she is. Bring him along, lads."

"All I ask is this — do you intend to use violence — do you intend to press me for the fleet?" roared Runnymede.

"And nothing less, by —!" The oath was lost in the clamorous assent of the whole gang, who, like a pack of hounds, hung about the free-born Briton, yelling, cursing, screaming, fighting.

Jack fought desperately: a hundred times he wished for a sword — a pistol — a poker — any deadly weapon. "The law, — thank God —! — the law

was on his side, and he might with impunity murder any number of his assailants."

"What a smart hand he'll make in a boarding-party!" was the derisive eulogy of one of the gang, as Jack, having seized a bludgeon from one of his enemies, cleared a circle about him, and then retreated with his back to a wall. Flourishing his cudgel around him, Jack Runnymede, like a gallant Briton, roared, at the pitch of his voice — "Remember — I warn you — it's illegal — against the law — in violation of — of — dearest rights — Englishmen — fellow-countrymen — succour — it's your cause — yours as well as mine — Britons — your — your rights! — your" —

Strange as it may appear to the reader, Jack Runnymede, calling upon the dearest hopes of his countrymen — appealing to them by their most sacred rights — by their love for their homes, their spouses, and their babes, — was suffered by staring Englishmen to be carried, like a carcase, away, — not one British finger moving in his defence! Jack had been seized in the Minories; hence, only a short time elapsed ere he was safely stowed in the Tower Tender. "It's illegal — you can't do it — you have violated the rights of the subject," cried Jack, foaming; and with his clothes torn to tatters in the struggle, he found himself in the floating prison. "Sir, you as a gentleman must know that this is contrary to the law," said Jack to an officer; "you must know that," —

"They 've pressed you, have they?" asked the officer.

"They have grossly violated the liberty of the subject," was the reply of Jack Runnymede.

"I don't admire impressment," observed the officer, drily.

"You can't, Sir; as a gentleman and a man of education, you must know that a pressed man is" —

"Not worth half a volunteer; therefore, my man, suppose you take the bounty?" suggested the officer.

"Bounty, Sir! Although my appearance may not now bespeak it, but I assure you, I am a gentleman," cried Jack.

"Glad to hear it; gentlemen make capital sailors. Away with him," was the brief order of the officer, and Jack with little ceremony was introduced to nearly a hundred companions, among whom were at least fifty victims to a violation of the law. — Jack Runnymede was received by his new friends with a cheer which, at least, betokened hospitality.

"This is a gentleman," exclaimed one of the ragamuffins, as he caught a glimpse of Jack — "this is a gentleman come here to wear out his old clothes," which presently was received with clamorous applause.

Runnymede was silenced — stupified by the scene around him. One roared a song in utter desperation — another blasphemed — a third hallooed — and more than one groaned in bitterness, and sobs as from a bursting heart told the deep torture of the sufferer.

Jack, touched by the intense agony of one man, forgot the acuteness of his own suffering. The poor fellow was gathered in a ball in the corner — his trembling hands covered his face; tears trickled through his fingers; and his whole body heaved and quivered, as if he struggled with some burning poison. He fought against his grief, and yet, at intervals, he could not master it — it would burst forth in querulous moaning.

"What 's the matter?" asked Jack — "what 's the matter?" Still the man was silent. "What 's the matter?" Jack repeated, laying his hand upon the man's shoulders.

"Keep off — or I 'll murder you," roared the man, and Jack started as from a maniac. At length, Runnymede ventured to observe — "I 'm — I 'm in trouble, friend, as well as you — but why take it so hardly?" For some time, the man remained silent, and only received the proffered sympathy of Runnymede with bitter scorn. At length, won by the superiority of his manners, and the kind words of our hero, the man briefly told the story of his present misery.

"I 'd been five years at sea. I 'd come home — my wife" — and here the sailor grasped his throat with his hand and paused — "my wife, with our little girl, — I hadn't seen the child" — the man writhed with anguish — "I hadn't seen her since she was a babe. My wife and child met me — there was her old father, too — well, they met me at the Docks — we went on — I was going home — I 'd forgot some-

thing I 'd left aboard — I told 'em to wait at the Black Dog — I went out, turned the street — the gang boarded me, and — and" — and the man dashed his fist against his skull like one frantic.

"And your wife, my friend — your wife?" said Runnymede.

"She 's waiting for me — waiting for me — and I 'm in the Tower Tender!" and the sailor laughed like a demon. "Waiting for me! ha! ha!"

"But there 's a remedy — I tell you, my friend," said Runnymede, "there is a remedy."

"What?" asked the sailor, moodily.

"What they 've done is against the law: every man may plead his *habeas corpus*, and" — Jack Runnymede was proceeding, when the man he was attempting to comfort turned fiercely round upon him.

"Why, d — n your heart!" he cried with intense bitterness — "if you ben't a lawyer."

"Whoop!" roared fifty voices — "whoop! we 've got a lawyer."

"No — no — no! Upon my soul, gentlemen," exclaimed Runnymede, "I am no such thing."

"What are you, then?" bawled two or three.

"I — I — I 'm a pressed man," said Runnymede, in a weeping, puling voice, and the sorrowful tone drew a burst of laughter from many of the hearers.

"Well, but you 're something more than that? What line was you in ashore? No gammon among friends. Speak out, like a man! Warn't you once pumped upon?" demanded a volunteer, whose con-

fident manner, and flippant speech displayed a person of town accomplishments. "Warn't you never pumped upon?"

"Never" — answered Jack Runnymede.

"Nor never in the Stone Jug?" continued the querist.

"I don't know what you mean, my friend," said Jack, very meekly.

"Oh! d—n pride! I mean Newgate, and you know it," was the indignant answer.

How strange are the accidents of life! thought Jack Runnymede; feeling himself become an object of contempt and laughter to the majority of his associates, on the score of his good character and gentility; and with this thought, he briefly stated to his hearers, that he, like most of them, had had his troubles.

"A sneaker, take my word for't;" exclaimed Jack's catechist to his particular companions, who unhesitatingly adopted his opinion.

"Don't despair, my good fellow," said Runnymede in a low voice, and after a long pause, to the disconsolate seaman. "I tell you there 's a remedy."

"Remedy! what remedy? Ar'n't we all here, like stolen niggers? — Hav'n't I lost my wife — my child? — torn from 'em, for what I know, never to see their blessed eyes again?"

"Yes — very true — you are dragged from your home, — as you say, from your wife and child — but still you may thank God," —

"For what?" roared the wretched husband and father.

"Why, that it 's against Magna Charta — that it 's in violation of the law — and that, in short, though treated like a beast, you are nevertheless an Englishman."

CHAPTER IX.

Next morning, a vessel sailed for the Nore with Jack and his companions, the number being augmented by some half-dozen captives made by the gang in the course of the night. To all, not utterly inconsolable, Runnymede dwelt upon the legal remedy for the abuse under which they suffered. "And how, my good friend — how was it, that you fell into their hands?" asked Jack of a melancholy new-comer.

"I was torn from my bed," answered the man, "the gang had heard that I had been to sea — they got in at the window — and" —

"And didn't you resist?" inquired Runnymede.

"I maimed one of 'em, I think — but 't was no use; — I was hauled off — my wife screaming — the children in their bed clothes crying — my old mother kneeling and cursing the gang, — and — there, mate, don't talk of it," and the man trembled from head to foot.

"Got into your house!" exclaimed Runnymede, "took you from your bed? Why, my dear friend, they can't do it."

"What do you mean, by 'they can't do it'? asked the man, with a scowl.

"Why, it 's against the law! in open violation of that great principle which makes the meanest hut of the humblest Englishman his impregnable castle. I tell you again, my good friend, they can't do it."

"Well, if they can't do it, then I 'm not here; so if you can persuade me to that, messmate — if you can make me believe that I 'm now at home at breakfast, with my — there, let 's have no more of it," cried the poor fellow, choking with emotion.

The vessel arrived at her destination; Jack and his companions were placed on board the guard-ship at the Great Nore, to be distributed to various ships as hands might be required. "Thank God!" said Jack to himself, as he stept aboard and saw several officers — "thank God! here are gentlemen! They must at once admit the flagrancy of the case — yes, — in another hour I shall be ashore." Jack stood eyeing the officers, making to himself an election of one for the depository of his secret, when he found himself violently pushed, and heard a voice braying in his ears, "Tower Tender-men all aft!" and Jack, turning with indignant looks to make a lofty speech to the boatswain's mate, was fortunately hurried on among the crowd of his fellow-voyagers. The list was read, John Runnymede answered to his name, and with his fellows was dismissed. "Why don't you take the bounty?" asked a sailor, whom, from his superior appearance, together with a heavy switch, formed of

three pieces of plaited ebony, adorned with a silver top and ferule, under his arm, Jack considered to be a person in authority — the ebony being, no doubt, the insignia of his office. "You may as well have the bounty."

"You are very good, Sir, indeed," replied Jack to the boatswain, for it was that intelligent disciplinarian, opening his eyes at the elaborate politeness of the pressed man; "you are very good, Sir; but — I have other views."

The boatswain was puzzled; he knew not whether to laugh or swear. He scratched his cheek in doubt, and Jack, with the greatest civility, again addressed him. "I beg your pardon, Sir — but I do assure you, I should accept it as a lasting favour at your hands, if you would have the kindness to inform me, where I can see the captain of this vessel."

There was something in the politeness of Runnymede that quite disarmed the boatswain; he felt himself quite overlaid by the fine manners of the ragged pressed man. Jack paused, and smiled in the boatswain's broad blank face for a reply: he then repeated "the captain of this vessel?" (the vessel being a seventy-four.)

"The captain? — why, you see — he 's gone to dine with the admiral — I 'm sorry, we can't man a boat for you," — said the satirical functionary.

"Don't mention it," observed Runnymede, joining his hands, and making his lowest bow.

"Perhaps the first lieutenant will do?" suggested the boatswain, "he 's next in command."

"You 're very good — very kind, indeed," exclaimed Runnymede, suddenly seizing the hand of the boatswain, who quite unused to such a mode of thanksgiving from such a person, instantly raised his ebony wand to acknowledge it. He was in a moment disarmed by the vivacity of Runnymede — "the first lieutenant — where can I find him?"

"Just now he 's at school — in the gun-room," answered the boatswain.

"What! have you a school aboard?" asked Runnymede.

"And nine-pins, and cricket, and everything you like. Here, Splinters, show this gentleman to the gun-room; he wants the first lieutenant." Splinters, looking at the boatswain, knew there was some game to be played to the cost of the pressed man, and, therefore, with great alacrity conducted Runnymede to the door of the gun-room. What was his astonishment to hear the "evening hymn" chaunted by boys' voices, the school closing every night with that solemnity! Runnymede edged himself into the school-room, and saw standing on each side a desk some half-dozen little midshipmen looking — Mr. Dickson, the first lieutenant, being present — very serious; and at another desk, boys of the second and third class, with the children of the warrant-officers and sailors of the ship. Mr. Dickson very frequently attended the performance of the evening hymn, the master of the ship, a choleric

Prussian, whose berth was on the starboard side of the gun-room, as frequently mounting to the deck until the hymn was ended. On the present occasion, however, Mr. Dickson had another duty to fulfil: for, in addition to his official labours, he had taken upon himself the task of watching over the morals, and punishing the transgressions of all the children in the ship; who, although no more than seven or eight years old, were, in common with adults, submitted to the visitation of the cat.

The evening hymn concluded, the punishment was about to commence. The culprit was led in: he was, in the present instance, a pale, thin little boy, perhaps seven years old. He shivered beneath the stony eye of Mr. Dickson, who stood with his old bare cocked-hat hugged under his arm — his withered features set with determination — his shoulders slightly bent — the very personification of stern duty in repose. The child begged for mercy, but Mr. Dickson nodded to the boatswain's mate. The boy was tied up; and the first lieutenant proceeded to dilate upon the enormity of the culprit's offence: he had dared to spin his peg-top on the after-deck, and had more than once been detected trying experiments on the temper of the he-goat, that animal we presume, for his great services to his Majesty's fleet, being an object of particular interest to Mr. Dickson. "Now, little boy," said the first lieutenant, and he seemed overflowing with kindness towards the offender, "you will be flogged for these offences; you know, little boy, that peg-tops are not allowed in the

ship," — "I didn't — indeed, Sir — I didn't," cried the child — "and you know, little boy, that the goat is not to have his beard pulled. Hem! hem! Boatswain's mate," — and Mr. Dickson, eying the cat, spoke quite like a father — "one tail, boatswain's mate;" and with one cord selected from the nine, the child was taught to eschew peg-tops as long as he was afloat, and to have on all and every occasion a particular respect for the he-goats of his Majesty's fleet.

Jack Runnymede was so confounded by the ceremony — so astonished at the importance which Mr. Dickson threw around the peccadilloes of the boy, and more than all, so disheartened by the appearance of the officer himself — that he did not venture to accost him, but resolved to keep his complaint for the ear of the captain alone. "What — what kind of a gentleman is Mr. Dickson?" Runnymede, purely out of curiosity, ventured to inquire of a sailor who had, as Jack thought, a communicative countenance.

"What sort? Why he messes by himself, and sells his rum," answered the sailor.

"Has he been long in the service?" asked Runnymede.

"You can see that by his coat, for he never had any other."

"And does he attend the — by-the-bye," and the thought suddenly flashed upon Jack — "if there 's a school, I suppose there 's a schoolmaster?"

"To be sure; only just now, you see, he 's in a bit of trouble."

"On what account?" asked Jack.

"Why, he thought, you see, he was all right, and let his hair grow; but they 've docked him again."

"And is it against the rules of the service that a schoolmaster should let his hair grow?" inquired Runnymede, wonderingly.

"You see, he wasn't a reg'lar schoolmaster — he was only on trial. He come down here among a batch of marines — a volunteer, as you may be" — said the sailor.

"I 'm a pressed man," said Jack, with a sigh.

"It 's all the same," said the philosophic tar. "Well, they drills him for a marine, and gives him brown bess, and mounts him on the gangway. One day, captain coming up the side sees Nankin's hands — for that 's his name — 'Dickson,' says the captain, 'that marine 's either a scholard or a pickpocket.' You know, he might ha' been both, but the captain wasn't to know that — 'either a scholard or a pickpocket,' says the captain, 'he 's got such smooth hands.' Well, they wanted somebody to learn the ship's boys, and they tries Nankin, and finds he can read, and write, and sum; and so they promotes him to the gun-room; and bit by bit, he casts his red and pipe-clay, and has the blessed impudence to let his hair grow."

"I see," said Runnymede, "he wished to quit the marines?"

"Proud as a mermaid with a new gold frame to

her looking-glass," said the sailor. "Well, he gets on — and gets on; and from messing with the carpenter in the fore cockpit, he gets right aft with the master's mate — sings songs to the purser's clerk's wife — wears boots when he goes ashore; and more than all, only yesterday — I heard him myself — ordered the bumboat-'oman to bring him off a tooth-brush."

Jack stared as the sailor, with great seriousness, touched on the last vanity of Nankin: then asked, "but what crime has the schoolmaster committed?"

"Why, he got leave to go to Lunnun two months ago. Mr. Highropes — he 's the flag-lieutenant — was Lunnun, too. Would you think it? The lieutenant going to — I think they call it Fox's-Hall — quite a grand place, who should he see there but the pot-hook marine, Nankin, with a long coat, and a squeeze hat under his arm? Well, when the lieutenant takes out a lady — some 'oman of quality, no doubt — to dance, Mr. Nankin, with no respect to his officer, has the impidence to think of dancing too!"

"And — and was this the only offence committed by the schoolmaster?" inquired the astonished Runnymede.

"And quite enough, aboard a man-of-war, I can tell you," answered the sailor, with a significant nod.

"Why, they never dared, — that is — he was never punished for?" —

"Warn't he? He hasn't got over it yet: directly he comes aboard, captain sends for him; tells him to rig

in red again, to mess for'ard, and to give up his track, that's his head, to the barber."

"Bless me!" exclaimed Jack Runnymede, astonished at the rigorous discipline. "Has a man no command over his own hair?"

"Not a marine," answered the communicative tar, with great dignity, "we wouldn't stand that. But I think the schoolmaster's beating a little up again."

"Why — why?" inquired Runnymede, interested for the scholarly victim.

"He hasn't been cropped these three weeks; and, more than that, yesterday he rigged out the blue jacket agin. Poor devil! but for all that, no man aboard a man-of-war has any right to — look, mate, there he goes!"

"What! the schoolmaster? — Where?" inquired Runnymede.

"There's his legs, going up the ladder," and the sailor pointed to a pair of thick, dwarfish limbs, almost bursting through blue worsted pantaloons. The upper part of their owner was unseen by Jack, but he hastily ran from the sailor in quest of it. As Jack ran aft, he was met by a fierce-looking man, who exclaimed, "Hallo! you're not going to dine with the captain, to-day — are you?"

"No," replied Runnymede, with a simplicity that evidently tickled the fellow, for he growled a laugh like a pleased bear. "No."

"I thought not; well, for'ard, if you please," and he pushed Runnymede before him, who in vain at-

tempted to explain his wishes to the despotic boatswain's mate.

Jack went upon deck, dived below again, looking on all sides for a pair of blue worsted pantaloons. At length, night came on, and Runnymede found himself in a small square place, at the bottom of the ship, which retreat, as he afterwards learned, was the fore cock-pit, sacred to the *lares* — if *lares* are ever found afloat — of the warrant officers. "Where — where shall I sleep?" thought Jack, and looking through a cabin window, he saw, by the light, a venerable person seated at a table poring over a book. Jack gazed with respect, nay, almost with awe, at the reader: never, he thought, had he beheld so old a man. His long white hair, parted at his forehead and carefully adjusted behind his ears, fell in a very stream of hoariness upon his shoulders: his face, of the finest outline, was pale, thin, and but little wrinkled: his large, white eyebrows were bent upon the volume.

"The bible, no doubt," thought Runnymede; who remained rapt by the venerable aspect of that good, peaceful, pious old man. "Yes — it's plain — he's the ship's clergyman. Instead of conferring with the schoolmaster, I 'll ask advice of this worthy soul. Who 'd have thought to have met a man with the countenance of a hermit in a seventy-four?" Jack knocked at the door of the old man's berth.

"Who 's there?" asked the aged tenant, in a high, shrill voice, with something of a northern accent. "Who 's there?"

Jack was clearing his throat to answer, when he heard the tittering of voices, and then a rapid movement of feet, and he turned his head to detect the cause. In this position, he received a violent blow that felled him to the deck, accompanied by a high-sounding oath, as he almost believed, uttered by the venerable inhabitant of the cabin.

"D—d dogs! — hope to 'lmighty I 've killed some o' ye!" and then Jack was convinced that it was the white-haired reader of the bible who had committed the assault.

"What — what have I done?" asked Runnymede, gathering himself up, rubbing his neck, and still upon his knees, staring in the face of the man of ninety winters.

"Hoot! who 's that?" asked the cock-pit Nestor.

"I — I 'm a pressed man," said Runnymede — "but — I —"

"What brings ye to my berth? I thought ye were just one of the d — d midshipmen."

At these words, there was a shout of laughter from unseen parties, between whom and Mr. Mac Acid, the venerable speaker, there was unremitting warfare. Jack Runnymede, hoping nothing from the enraged aspect of the old man, crawled away.

Young midshipmen, like young dogs, very soon discover the antipathies of those it is their destiny to live with; but, unlike the more useful animal, the young midshipman does not avoid the prejudices of the party, but takes every opportunity of revenging

himself upon them. Such was the state of things between the juvenile midshipmen of the guard-ship — for, of course, we do not include the midshipmen of forty and fifty — and Mr. Mac Acid, the gunner; for he was not, as Jack had hastily concluded, a divine. Thus, it gave a particular edge to the pleasure of flirting with the carpenter's black-eyed daughter, that the time and place for such relaxation, was "evening, the fore cock-pit," close to Mac Acid's berth. There had been many skirmishes between the gunner and the boys, but the midshipmen generally made a safe retreat, the candle of the gunner being extinguished by the enemy, and sometimes carried off. On the present evening, Mr. Mac Acid, like a thrifty officer, sat conning his volume — for it was not the bible, but his book of stores — with his door ajar, and a heavy cane at his side, prepared at all points for the enemy. When his stick smote the neck of Runnymede, how, for a brief moment did the old man rejoice! To kill a spider, a rat, a pole-cat, a snake, great as may be the satisfaction to those who loathe such things, was as nothing to the delight that Mac Acid would have felt at the destruction of a young midshipman. We verily believe that the extacy of the sport would have carried the old man off.

"Is there no way, Mr. Mac Acid," asked the good-natured captain of the gunner, "is there no way of reconciling you to the young gentlemen? Can't you, by any means, be brought to stomach a midshipman?"

"I think, Sir," replied the venerable Mr. Mac Acid, shaking his white head — "I think I could like one in — a pie."

CHAPTER X.

EARLY next morning, Runnymede was awakened by a voice bawling, "lash and carry — lash and carry;" which command was translated to Jack as an imperative order to the sleepers to pack up their hammocks and bear them upon deck. The order was lost upon Jack, who having no hammock — no bed, no blanket — had lain upon the bare plank. The season was cold November, but, thanks to the number of sleepers, there was no lack of warmth. Once in the night, Jack went upon deck, resolved — despite of the season — to walk until morning in the open air: he was, however, driven down by the sentry, lest — for as a pressed man, he was an object of peculiar distrust — he should attempt to swim ashore. It was past three in the morning ere Jack could fall asleep, and then he was harassed by dreams, in which he thought himself, with twenty bold barons, assembled in a cave at Reigate, concocting Magna Charta. At length, "up rose the sun," and up rose the boatswain's mates; and one of these gentle officers, by the united aid of his voice and foot, awoke Jack to real life. Jack, however, never ate such a breakfast: the savoury cocoa gave comfort to his bowels, and hope to his heart; hence,

when the boatswain's mate piped "Tower Tender-men all aft," Jack stepped along the deck "like man new made." Fortunately, he was not aware of the outrage committed upon him during the night, or the consciousness of his ludicrous appearance might have humbled him. On board ship there is a great contempt — perhaps a very laudable one — for long-tailed coats; hence, Runnymede had fallen a victim to the prejudice, for whilst in his slumbers — perhaps at the very moment he was suggesting the most vital article of Magna Charta — his grass-green long-tailed coat was ruthlessly abbreviated into a jacket.

Runnymede stood in a line with his companions of the Tower Tender, whilst a lieutenant-commander, newly appointed to a gun-brig — to be manned, rigged, and sent to sea in a week — looked at the lot to make a selection for his ship's company. As the officer paused before Runnymede, Jack jumped from the deck, and exclaimed, "Thieves!"

"Hallo, my man — hallo," said the officer, "you've lost something?"

"Look, Sir, — look!" — and Jack turned his back to the lieutenant, and with his hand behind him, exhibited his dishonoured coat. "There's thieves aboard — thieves, Sir!"

"Shouldn't at all wonder," said an officer, casting his eye along the line of "Tower Tender-men."

"But, my dear Sir," cried Runnymede to the lieutenant-commander, who smiled at Jack's simplicity — "my dear Sir" —

"Anything in the pockets?" asked one of the ship's officers.

"No, Sir — but the — tails" —

"Ha! never mind them — sailors ar' n 't monkies, they can go better aloft without tails."

Jack was silent; but he eyed the face of the lieutenant-commander with increasing trepidation, as the officer picked out his men. "If — if," thought Jack, "he should choose me — if — ha! I say," and Jack beckoned to a short, thick creole, with his hair cropped close behind, in a blue jacket, and blue worsted pantaloons. Jack judged of the whole by a part, and knowing the pantaloons, concluded that it must be the schoolmaster who was in them.

"Do you know that man, Nankin?" asked Dickson the first lieutenant, seeing Jack make signs to the pedagogue.

"Oh dear, no, Sir!" replied the schoolmaster, with earnest rapidity.

"He seems to know you; perhaps, met you in London?" said the mild lieutenant, casting one of his feline looks at the swarthy scholar.

"Indeed, Sir, no!" said Nankin, the blood rising to his tawny cheek at the word London.

"Silence, my man — silence, you 're not ashore now," said the first lieutenant to Runnymede, who, if he talked at all, assuredly only talked with his forefinger; for he continued, though in vain, to beckon to the schoolmaster, who in a minute afterwards vanished on the deck.

The draught of men for the gun-brig was completed; the boatswain's mate piped "Halcyon's men, away!" and Jack Runnymede, to his exceeding satisfaction, remained aboard the guardship one of the unchosen. The gun-brig was destined to a three years' station at the West Indies, and two of Jack's pressed companions, whose stories we have briefly touched upon, were among the number selected for foreign service; Runnymede continuing to the last to assure them, that no authority *could* press them, and that the humblest Englishman had a castle in his meanest hovel.

It happened unfortunately for Jack Runnymede that, only a few days before his arrival on board the guardship, it had been resolved to adorn her hull with a new coat of paint; and though Jack was neither by taste nor education fitted even for that lowest walk of the art, he was considered by the boatswain's mate to be fully equal to the task of scraping clean the timbers preparatory to the decoration. Being a most servile task, it was allotted to the most ignorant; and the known accomplishments of Runnymede were not calculated to command the deepest respect on board a man-of-war.

"There — lay hold," said a boatswain's mate to Jack, and he held forth an iron implement of about eight inches long, of the shape of a garden hoe.

"What's this?" asked Jack.

"Lay hold — and no palaver." Runnymede obe-

diently took the scraper, still staring at it with vacant ignorance.

"There — go over the larboard quarter gallery," said the mate.

"And what — what is to be done with this?" asked Jack, with a helpless look, now at the scraper, and now at its donor.

"Done with it! here, come with me;" and the mate griped Runnymede's collar.

"Really, my good Sir," — said Jack, gently resenting the liberty, "I must beg that — I assure you — I am unused to" —

The boatswain's mate stared at Runnymede, and then with rare good-temper croaked a laugh, and kept shaking Jack by the collar: then suddenly letting him go, he pushed him violently onward. Runnymede was again about to remonstrate, when he was confused, cowed by the savage demeanour of his task-master, who drove him towards the quarter gallery, where he saw a single plank slung in ropes over the side.

"There — do as he does," said the boatswain's mate, pointing to one of Jack's Tender companions, who, standing on the plank, resignedly laboured with his scraper.

"I — I couldn't stand there if you'd give me the ship," cried Jack; "and I scrape! Really, my good man, we had better understand one another. I — the fact is, I'm a gentleman."

"I know'd that; do you think we'd let anybody but gentlemen scrape the ship? To be sure you are — there, scrape away now till eight bells, or by —!" and the boatswain's mate nodded at Jack, and winked with terrible meaning. "Over with you!" he roared out, and seizing Runnymede by the collar, the fellow fairly dropped Jack on the plank. "Now — scrape! scrape!" — and poor Jack began to scratch a little harder than a mouse at the rock-like timbers of the guard-ship.

"This is a queer go," said Jack's companion, whose removal to his majesty's navy had, it was more than probable, lightened the labour of some of his majesty's turnkeys. "A very queer go."

"You know," said Jack, continuing to scrape, "you know, they can't do it."

"That's plain," replied Fogleton; for such was the name of Jack's fellow-workman.

"They may think they can do it, but they can't; they have no power to make us do this — take my word for it, they hav'n't," and Jack scraped.

"Else I don't know what liberty's like," said Fogleton.

"Liberty, my friend — liberty is the essence of an Englishman's being — thank God! there's *habeas corpus*," cried Runnymede, scraping.

"That there is," answered Fogleton, looking warily about him for the boatswain's mate, — "that there is."

"And trial by jury, eh?" asked Jack.

"I should think so," replied Fogleton; and he spoke as a man perfectly acquainted with that fact.

"And, thank God! we have Magna Charta," exclaimed Runnymede.

"I believe we have, too," said Fogleton.

"Magna Charta, which insures the liberty of the subject," cried Jack, still scraping.

"So I have heard," remarked Fogleton. "But, I say — if we have all these things, how the devil is it that you and me 's here?"

"Oh! what they've done, they can't do," answered Runnymede: "there 's a remedy. Thank God! we're Englishmen."

"Oh, I 'm proud of my country," said Fogleton: "for my part, never wish to leave it. As Englishmen, we ought to be proud of — of — of — everything. Phewgh! if the cold don't cut my fingers to the bone."

"It *is* cold; but you are right, my friend; though we have suffered a little inconvenience, we have our remedy. As you say, we ought to be proud of everything: look at our wooden walls — ar'n't they glorious?" asked Runnymede.

"Very fine; very fine, indeed; specially to sing about, but" — and Folgeton blew his fingers — "but precious hard to scrape."

"Never mind; as I 've said, they can't make us do it — there 's a remedy — there 's" —

"Quarter-gallery, there!" roared the boatswain's mate.

Runnymede, looking up, inquired, very politely —

"Beg your pardon, did you speak to me?"

"Can you play the fiddle?" asked the mate, of Runnymede.

"I could once do something on the violoncello," answered Jack.

"Why, what's that?" inquired the puzzled mate.

"What is it?" cried Fogleton, contemptuously, "why, a violinsellar's a fiddle's grandfather."

"Can you do anything besides?" questioned the mate.

"I could once play a little on the German flute," replied Runnymede.

"D—d if your fortin isn't made," rejoined the mate, quickly. "Here, tumble up!" and Runnymede scrambled from the plank to the deck, and resigned his scraper in favour of, possibly, a more musical instrument.

"Do they have concerts aboard?" thought Jack, as he followed the boatswain's mate to the waist.

"The fiddler's dead and the fifer's sick," said the mate, "and we want to get the water up."

"And do they raise water by music?" asked Jack.

"There! play away," cried the mate, thrusting a sixpenny cracked fife, carefully bound with tin at either end, into the hands of the musician.

"Really, it's impossible, Sir, that I could play on a thing like this — I do assure you," and Jack raised his shoulders, and flung back his arms, with that deprecating look, which probably the reader may have

seen in the face of a singer, very ill indeed with an apocryphal cold.

"Blow — blow away!" roared the mate.

"Well, if you insist upon it — I — but am I to play here?" asked Runnymede.

"Strike up!" growled the boatswain's mate; and Runnymede, to the horror of his own ears, essayed a slow movement.

"That won't do!" cried the mate; "playing the fife like a archbishop — strike up a jig!" Jack obeyed; and as he played a quick tune upon the wretched pipe, about a dozen men, hauling a rope, stepped to the tune, raising butts of water from the hold. Jack had only once played through the tune, when the boatswain's mate applauded his performance in the most unequivocal way. "Well, Squeak may die now as soon as he likes, for you've half-a-gale more wind in you than him." Thus, afloat as on shore, is the old servant forgotten in the new comer! "You're all right for life," continued the mate, charmed with Runnymede's art — "no; we'll never let go of you."

Bad as the fife was, it was not to Jack quite so bad as the scraper; and he went on playing several airs — his reputation increasing with every tune. The men paused for two or three minutes, and Jack took breath. At this juncture, and a little before the men were about to resume their work, and the inspiriting influence of music would be again in demand, the short, thick, Creole schoolmaster appeared upon deck. Now Runnymede, despite of all he had heard of Mr. Nankin,

believed him to be a gentleman; and, possibly, a scholar: hence, felt confident of obtaining his sympathy and his assistance. It was Jack's wish to dispatch a letter to Mr. Candidus: "He will, I am sure," thought Jack, "on knowing where I am, bring me to London on *habeas corpus;* yes, thank heaven! *habeas corpus* is not suspended — and I can avail myself of its mercies; for, thank God! I am yet an Englishman."

In an evil moment did Mr. Nankin present himself to the eyes of Runnymede; for, careless of the wants of the water-drawers, Jack stepped away to address the pedagogue; and heedless of the cry of "music," "fifer," "lubber," from the sailors, sought to secure the services of the scholar. "I trust, Sir," said Jack, taking off all the hat that was left him, "I trust, Sir, that my situation as an unfortunate gentleman will be my apology for addressing you?" Mr. Nankin bent his large black eyes very disdainfully on the miserable figure before him, and, endeavouring to brush up the hair which, by the indulgence of the captain, had been suffered to remain three weeks uncropt, was about to turn away: this action of Nankin brought to Runnymede's recollection the peculiar miseries of the schoolmaster. "Ha! Sir," said Jack, staring at Nankin's hair, "they can't do that, Sir — they can't indeed."

"Do what, man?" asked Nankin. "Do what?"

"It's an offence against the person, Sir, for a man to cut another's hair against his will. But pardon me, Sir, — I was about to say — Oh!" shrieked Jack; "Oh!" and Jack sank doubled to the deck; he then

rose, writhing like a snake, and ground his teeth, and his face was purple with pain.

The reader may recollect that, in a by-gone page, we spoke of the boatswain of the guard-ship, and, further, of an implement, his constant companion, formed of three ebony twigs twisted, and bound with metal. Unhappily for poor Runnymede, the boatswain, taking his noon-day walk, espied him absorbed in his address to the schoolmaster, the men vainly calling for "the fifer." Without a word — a syllable — the boatswain, with his huge hand, grasped his weapon, and, as if he would have put the strength of a whole life into one blow, smote Runnymede a little above the hips.

"You want another — do you?" asked the boatswain, shaking the ebony at poor Jack, speechless with pain.

At length, Runnymede was capable of stammering — "You — you — can't do it! You know — you — can't do it."

"What! you want another?" and the boatswain was evidently desirous of a repetition of his peculiar enjoyment.

"Oh! you — you shall suffer for this," cried Jack; "see if you don't suffer for this! I'm not to be struck in this way — for, thank God!" —

"What! you *will* have another?" and never before did the boatswain exhibit so much self-denial.

"You know, you can't do it!" repeated Jack, as he think', very unnecessarily.

"Come; blow away! Come — rig out your fife! Blow!" and the boatswain held aloft the plaited ebony.

Oh, life! how terrible are thy changes! Think, gentle reader — think of Jack Runnymede — nursed in comfort — written down gentleman — a man, who had twenty times in his life shown his acute taste by hissing a false note at the opera — think of him, a pressed man aboard a guard-ship — his coat lessened to a jacket — the rim rent from his hat — his shirt in tatters — with a vile, cracked fife in his hand, wherein he is ordered "to blow," for the inspiration of a very mixed company of thieves and vagabonds, and the penalty of his disobedience, a scourging with plaited ebony!

"You won't blow?" roared the boatswain, with rising wrath.

"I — I" and poor Runnymede, his blood boiling, and his flesh quivering, endeavoured to form his mouth to the fife, but produced a sound very like that of the wind gasping through a key-hole.

"Well, then, if you won't blow," cried the boatswain, and he brandished his weapon.

"What will — what — what will you have?" inquired poor Runnymede.

"Give us 'Jack's alive,'" exclaimed the boatswain, with unintentional satire.

Again Runnymede vainly whistled in the fife, and again the boatswain threatened. Jack caught the glowing eye of his executioner, and, after an effort, burst into full strain.

The required quantity of water being drawn from

the hold, Jack hoped that he might be allowed to retire below, and — if he could beg or steal a sheet of paper — dispatch a letter to London. Jack, however was doomed to be disappointed; for, in a few minutes, a cutter, with a large black bull painted in her mainsail, came alongside. Beef, by the half-carcase, was to be hoisted aboard, and again the music of Jack was to lighten the labour of his shipmates. "If I'm made to play whilst they hoist water and get aboard the beef, I suppose they'll want my fife at their dinner," and then Jack cursed the vanity that made him publish his accomplishments.

"What! you won't blow?" roared the boatswain, as Jack stood with one hand to his back, the other holding the fife. "You can't, eh?" and again the threatened ebony drew music from the pressed man. "I see you can play," cried the boatswain "so, if there's any hitch, I'll give you double allowance the next time."

"It 's very well," exclaimed Jack, "but you can't do it: yes, yes — there 's *habeas corpus* — you think you have me safe enough, but no — no — thank God! I 'm an Englishman."

About a month had elapsed, and still Jack Runnymede remained the Orpheus of the waist. At length he contrived to get a letter put into the post-office; a letter to Mr. Candidus, who was immediately to obtain the freedom of his client by means of *habeas corpus*. Mr. Candidus, however, acting upon his own discretion, thought, under all circumstances, his client

would be more certain of a dinner if remaining aboard a man-of-war. Jack had been of great service to Mr. Sidewind, whose party was now in office; nay, Sidewind himself, newly crawled into parliament through not a very open borough, had a small place in the ministry; hence, he was enabled to serve an old constituent. Moreover, he did serve him.

A letter "on his majesty's service" was received by the captain of the guard-ship, recommending to his notice "an unfortunate person, a very respectable man — a man of superior breeding — named John Runnymede. He was fully competent to the duties of a purser's clerk."

Jack Runnymede was summoned to the quarter-deck, and informed by the captain of his good fortune. He was immediately handed over to the master's mate, Mr. Dark, who took him down to his berth in the after cock-pit, where Jack had the additional advantage of messing with Nankin, the tawny schoolmaster; a person, as he himself averred, of the very highest connexions in London.

Candidus had presented ten guineas to poor Runnymede, with which he was enabled to make a very respectable appearance; although, with strange taste, he refused to purchase the blue worsted pantaloons of the schoolmaster at a few shillings, Mr. Nankin himself having a great many pair of them, and therefore capable of parting with one sample to a friend at a moderate price.

"Capital fellow, Mr. Sidewind — yes, it was no

matter how he voted, I always supported him," said Runnymede. "See what it is to have a vote, Sir!" he would exclaim to Nankin. "In some countries 't would have been of little use; but, thank God! I 'm an Englishman."

In a week, Jack Runnymede quitted the guard-ship, being appointed purser's clerk to a frigate.

CHAPTER XI.

"No, Sir — no — I shall proceed by criminal information." These were the words of a grey-haired gentleman of sixty to a dingy, squab man of the same age. "He has accused me of peculation" —

"Well, but you know, between ourselves," said the dark man. —

"I know what you 're going to say — that he can prove it — never mind that: I won't let him. I may do as I please on that point, for, thank God! I 'm an Englishman."

The first speaker was a retired purser in his majesty's navy — and no other than Jack Runnymede. The short black-looking man, Nankin, the schoolmaster; who, discharged at the peace, had somehow swollen himself into an attorney of comprehensive employment.

Jack Runnymede had, with great industry, made himself a fortune. He was, therefore, particularly sensitive to an attack that had been levelled at his character as purser. He was resolved to punish the

scandal; no matter whether the charge was true or false — he was the best judge of that. The law gave him protection — for, "thank God! he was an Englishman."

Shortly after this, the retired Runnymede was solicited for his vote. "Pray, Sir," he asked the candidate, "what are your opinions on the law of libel as it stands — arrest for debt — and impressment?" And putting his arms under his coat-tails, Mr. Runnymede awaited an answer.

"In its present operation I am opposed to the law of libel — certainly, to arrest for debt — and most assuredly to the infamous and inhuman system of impressment," was the reply of the candidate.

"My service to you, Sir," said Jack Runnymede, "you don't have my vote. Your politics may be very well for a garden of Eden, Sir, but not for this country. What! change the law of libel? Leave open any man of property to the scurrility of shirtless vagabonds — create litigation by abolishing imprisonment for debt — and sweep us from the world as a naval power by doing away with impressment? No, Sir; not while I can lift my voice will I consent to this. By losing one or all of these privileges, I should cease to be grateful, as I am, for my country — should no longer bless my stars that I am a Briton — no longer thank God that I am an Englishman!"

ADAM BUFF:

THE MAN "WITHOUT A SHIRT."

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THE MAN "WITHOUT A SHIRT."

CHAPTER I.

ADAM lay in bed, and, with his heart in his ears, listened — listened, but heard nothing. A shadow fell upon his face; and, uttering an impatient groan or grunt, and hugging the blanket close around his neck, he swung himself like a resolute pig upon his side, and then sent forth a long-drawn sigh. Hapless Adam Buff!

Inexorable time goes onward, and Adam sleeps. Oh, ye gentle ministers, who tune our dreaming brains with happy music — who feed the snoring hungry with apples fresh from Paradise — who take the fetters from the slave, and send him free as the wild antelope, bounding to his hut — who make the henpecked spouse, though sleeping near his gentle tyrant, a lordly Turk — who write on the prison walls of the poor debtor, "received in full of all demands," — whatever ye may be, wherever ye reside, we pray ye, for one hour at least, cheat poor Adam Buff! Bear him on your rainbow wings from an attic, once white-

washed, in Seven Dials, to the verdant slope of the Cerra Duida; for there, saith Baron Humboldt, "shirt trees grow fifty feet high!" There lay him down, under that most household blossom that "hangs on the bough," and there let him cast his gladdened eyes upwards, and see shirts, ready made, advertised on every spray. And there, to the sound of the Indian drum, let him see, disporting on the grass, men and maidens clothed — for in the Cerra Duida the shirt hath no sex — in newly gathered garments, "the upper opening of which admits the head, and two lateral holes cut admit the arms!"

"Are you up, Mr. Buff?" said a voice on the outside of the door.

"Come in," said Adam, awakened by the querist.

The door opened, and a dry, yellowish matron, of some three-score, entered the room. From her perfect self-possession, it was evident that she was landlady of the domain. "Did you see the fire, last night, Mr. Buff?" asked Mrs. Nox, the widow of a respectable baker.

"I heard the engines," replied the philosopher.

"The sky was like the last day," said the landlady.

"It *was* red," remarked Adam.

"Poor souls!" and Mrs. Nox stood at the foot of the bed, rubbing her hands, and looking piteously at the nose and cheeks of Buff, as they came out in ruby relief from a halo of blanket.

"Many burned?" asked Adam, with a slight cough.

"It isn't known yet — but such a loss of property! Two sugar bake-houses, a distiller's, besides the house of a pawnbroker. Lost everything — for I do hear there was nothing insured," said Mrs. Nox.

"Very sad, indeed; but this is human life, Mrs. Nox," observed Adam, with commendable composure.

"It is, indeed, Mr. Buff," and the landlady sighed.

"Yes, this is life! We rise early, and go to bed late — we toil and we sweat — we scrape up and we lay by — we trick and we cheat — we use light weights and short measures" —

"It 's as true as the Bible," said the baker's widow.

"We harass our reason to its utmost to arrive at wealth — and then, when we think we have built our nest for life, when we have lined it with wool, and gilded the outside, and taxed our fancy for our best ease — why, what comes of it? Molly, the housemaid, drops a lighted candle-snuff among the shavings — a cat carries a live coal from under the fire among the linen — the watchman springs his rattle — and, after a considerable time, engines play upon our ruin. Yes, Mrs. Nox, this is life; and as all of us who live must put up with life, grieving 's a folly, Mrs. Nox." Thus spoke Adam.

"It 's true — it 's true, Mr. Buff — but yet to have a great deal, and to lose it all," said the landlady.

"We should always keep philosophy," said Adam Buff.

"A fire-escape?" asked Mrs. Nox, doubtingly; and then, with sudden illumination — "Oh, I see — religion."

"The religion of the heathens. For my part, I feel, if the warehouses had been my own, I could have looked at the devouring element, without ever forgetting myself."

"You may call it devouring, Mr. Buff — nothing come amiss to it. Poor Mrs. Savon!" —

"My laundress!" exclaimed Adam, his feet plunging spasmodically under the blanket.

"She lived at the back — all her linen destroyed," said Mrs. Nox.

"*Her* linen!" echoed Adam Buff, turning very white. "What! all? — everything?"

"Every rag," replied Mrs. Nox, with peculiar emphasis.

Adam stretched his legs, and his jaw fell. Poor plaything of malevolent fortune! Adam was precisely in the strait of an author, whose original manuscript is accidentally given to the flames, no other copy being extant. Plainly, Mrs. Savon had Adam's shirt — and Adam had no other copy. Now, Buff, to give him his due, could have philosophised all day on the destruction of the sugar-houses; but the loss of his shirt went very near to his bosom. Adam lay despairing, when his good genius knocked at the door, then immediately opened it, and walked

into the room; the landlady very civilly tripping down stairs.

"I believe, Sir," said the stranger, "you are Mr. Buff?"

"I am, Sir," said Adam, suppressing a shiver.

"I think it very fortunate that I find you as I do," — Adam looked a doubt — "I was fearful that you might be dressed and from home." Adam cleared his throat, and still made a cravat of the blanket. "You perceive, I have used no ceremony; it isn't my manner, Sir. To begin: you are quite without incumbrance, Mr. Buff?"

"Quite," answered Adam, with much decision; and was in his turn, about to question his interrogator on the object of his visit, when he deferred in silence to the prosperous appearance of the stranger, who — though apparently about sixty — was dressed with all the care of a beau. Twice was Adam about to speak, when his eye fell upon the white shirt-frill — ample as our great grandmother's fan — of his visitor, and a sense of inferiority made him hold his peace.

"Mr. Buff, I have heard you are a philosopher?" Adam meekly inclined his eyelids on the blanket. "Such a man, I have some time sought. It matters not how I have discovered you — that, in good season, you shall know. It is my wish to place in your hands a most valuable, nay, a most sacred deposit." Adam instictively opened both his palms. "That is, if I find you really a philosopher." Adam

looked a Socrates. "This morning, if you please, we'll enter on the business."

"I will wait upon you, Sir, at" —

"No — no — no. I couldn't think of parting with you: when you are dressed, we'll go together," said the visitor, and Adam's face looked suddenly frost-bitten. "But, bless me! do you rise without a fire, this weather?"

"Man, Sir," said Adam, "never so well asserts his dignity, as when he triumphs over the elements."

"Very true — and pray don't think me effeminate, but I always like my shirt aired," said the old gentleman.

"Mine, I hear, was aired last night," said Adam Buff, and the engines rattled through his brain — "though without my consent to the ceremony."

"Ha! a careful laundress," said the visitor, and Adam smiled a sickly smile. "The very man, I wanted," thought the old gentleman; then, rising from his chair, to the keen delight of Adam, he walked to the door. "Real philosophy takes little time to dress, Mr. Buff. If you please, I 'll wait below," and the speaker left the room, Buff smiling benignantly on his exit.

Adam leapt from his bed, and securing the latch of the door with a friendly wooden peg, proceeded to array himself with the speed of an actor, and the simplicity of a monk who had never dreamt of flax. However, whilst Adam dresses — why have we no

other word to paint the imperfect solemnity? — we have time to explain the purpose of the visitor.

Jonas Butler was a ruddy bachelor of sixty-two, and an ardent admirer of philosophy. We will not roundly assert that he always understood the object of his admiration, but his devotion to it was no whit the less from his ignorance: nay, we question if it was not heightened by imperfect knowledge. Philosophy was his idol — and so the thing was called philosophy, he paused not to pry into its glass eyes — to question the paint smeared upon its cheeks — the large bead dangling from its nose — and its black and gilded teeth — not he; but down he fell upon his knees, and lifted up his simple hands, and raised his pullet voice, and cried — "Divine philosophy!" What a fortunate thing that philosophy is so musical a word! But to the object of Mr. Butler's call on Adam.

To the old gentleman the world was one large easy chair, wherein he might eat his venison, drink his port, take his nap, or, when he pleased, philosophise in grateful equanimity. He had, however, one tender care — in the newly-breeched person of his nephew, Jacob Black; a boy whom he was determined to make a practical philosopher. "Ha!" he would say, as he looked down upon the nascent victim, "the statue is there, if we can but cut it out." And Adam Buff was chosen as the moral sculptor.

The sound of feet was just audible on the staircase, and Mr. Butler, turning in the passage, saw Buff stealing as softly down as though his landlady was sick, and he feared to disturb her. Buff was a heavy man, and yet he trod as upon the points of nails, and shrugged his shoulders, and vainly tried to compose his wrinkled features. So walks a saint who hath lost his outer cuticle.

Mr. Butler and Adam turned into the street. "A dreadful fire, last night," said Mr. Butler.

Buff clapt his finger to the top button of his coat, lifted the collar a little about his neck, and answered — "Very destructive, indeed."

Butler and Buff walked on. One moment, thoughtful reader. Behold the pair as they recede: could you not, even without our preface, divine from their habits, their separate bearing, the distinctive character of each? Look at Jonas Butler; a thickish, middle-sized person, in lustrous black — his hat as smooth and jetty as a raven's wing — a line of cambric snow above his coat — his foot taking the pavement as it were his own freehold — and, in every limb and gesture of the man, self-comfort, self-content. Now, look at Adam; though a full head higher than his patron, he does not look so tall — he does not walk, but touches the earth as if by sufferance; and there seems at work in his whole frame, an accommodating meanness to lessen himself to the dimensions of his companion. To walk at his full height seems to him a presumption — he bends and limps out of pure

courtesy; to make nothing of himself would be little more than to show a due respect to his associate. Never mind Buff's coat — that is a vulgar sign and type of misery — heed not his hat, that has braved as many storms as a witch's sieve — shut your eyes to the half sole of the left shoe — but look at the man, or men, and tell us, if you do not look upon a prosperous patron who has lured a starveling from his garret by the savoury steam of a promised dinner? Is it so? No, it is not: it is a philosopher leading a philosopher.

Walk on, Adam Buff; and for the urchin trundling his hoop, now sometimes at thy side, sometimes before, sometimes behind thee; frown not on him — he is not what he seems. No; he is not a smutch-faced schoolboy, but Fortune in disguise — the hoop is her dread wheel; and thou, henceforth, art her chosen leman.

"Sir, — he has not a shirt to his back!" How often does this avowal convey the dreariest picture of human destitution. All our sympathies are expected to be up and crying for the victim. A whole nunnery might have wept for Adam; yet was he, in his dearest want most rich. It is true, the conflagration of the preceding night had put our hero to the coldest shift that poverty can lay upon human flesh; and yet, like thrice-tried gold, Adam came forth pure and glittering from the fire.

CHAPTER II.

"HA! the fire!" exclaimed Mr. Butler, pausing and directing the attention of Adam to the smoking ruins. "Bless me! very extensive, indeed," and the two stood and meditated, though with very different feelings, on the devastation. Mr. Butler eyed the scene with the tranquillity of a philosopher who had lost nothing by the calamity; glancing at the blackened walls and smouldering rafters with admirable self-possesion. Adam, however, was made of weaker flesh; for there was visible emotion in his face, as he tried to make out the attic of his laundress from the fifty domestic nooks, now laid open to the profanation of the public eye.

"A fine property but yesterday, and now," said Mr. Butler, taking snuff, "a heap of ruins."

"Gone to tinder," cried Adam, brooding over his own peculiar loss.

"Yes — it is hard, to have our household gods played upon — to see our home, filled with all home's sweets, blazing like the pile that burns the phœnix," — observed Mr. Butler, very profoundly. "To be stripped, perhaps, to the skin in this inclement season," and Butler looked on Buff, who shivered at the touching supposition. "And yet, Mr. Buff, what is nakedness, when we have philosophy?"

Adam was about to answer in, doubtless, a sympathetic strain, when an alarm of a falling wall suddenly brought the crowd upon him. Mr. Butler had

already taken to his heels, showing that philosophy can sometimes run like an ostrich; but Buff, either not possessing so much philosophy, or having greater bulk, was slower in his motion, and thus unluckily impeded the retreat of a gigantic drayman, who revenged himself of the impediment, by dealing out to Adam an impressive blow on the cheek. Many of the mob who saw the outrage, saw that the blood of Buff was up, for he turned round, looking death, and instinctively clenching his fists. "A fight! A fight!" exclaimed the crowd in a burst of pleasure, and some providently called for "a ring." The drayman stood prepared — Mr. Butler, who had philosophically looked on, approached Adam; it was an eventful moment for Buff, who stood, breathing heavily, and measuring the figure of his assailant "Better strip, Sir," said a disinterested counsellor from the crowd — whilst another, who had stuck his tobacco-pipe in his hat-band to devote himself more entirely to the service, said, in the blandest tones, his eyes twinkling up in the face of Buff — "I'll hold your coat, Sir." The offer seemed to decide Adam, for he placed his hand to his top button, and when the crowd hoped to see a fine anatomy, Buff pulled still higher the collar of his coat, cast a look of scorn on the grinning drayman, and loudly proclaimed him to be unworthy of his notice. Saying which, he tried to step from the mob, who closed about him, and, with derisive yells and hootings, hung upon his heels. However, the reward of Buff was near; for Butler made up to him, and,

squeezing his hand, exclaimed, "I honour you, Mr. Buff — I reverence you; you have shown a philosophy worthy of old Greece," — (it was lucky for Adam, he could not show a shirt) — "you have shown yourself superior to the low and ignorant assaults of — ten thousand devils!" shouted Mr. Butler, in a higher key, and leapt like a kangaroo. And, with all his philosophy, well he might; for the individual who had offered to hold Adam's coat, having been repulsed in his kindness, had seized the hose of one of the fire-engines, and, with unerring aim, had deluged not only Buff, but his patron. A roar of laughter from the crowd applauded the skill of the marksman. Mr. Butler stood dripping and melancholy as a penguin. Three times he called, at the top of his voice, "Constable!" and "constable" was kindly echoed by the mob. However, no constable appearing, Mr. Butler called the next best thing — he called a coach. The coachman obeyed; and, descending from his box, opened the door: for a moment, however, he paused at the reeking freight before him; however, humanity and his fare prevailed, and he admitted the half-drowned men, and touching his hat and striking-to the door, he asked if he should drive "to the Humane Society?"

"To — Street," said Mr. Butler, being too wet to understand the attempted joke. Away rattled the coach, the wags among the crowd shouting — "Do you want umbrellas, gentlemen?" "I say, coachman — why don't you wring 'em before you put 'em in?" Mr.

Butler sat as silent as the image of a water-god; and Buff uttered no word, but shook like a poodle new from the tub. The coach arrived at Mr. Butler's house. "Well, Sir, what is your fare?" asked Mr. Butler, freezingly.

"Why, Sir — let me see — six shillings," said the coachman, very confidently.

"Six shillings!" cried Buff — "why, your fare is" —

"I know what my fare is for passengers — but we charge what we like for luggage."

"Luggage!" exclaimed Buff, and he looked round for the *impedimenta.*

"Luggage. The fare itself is half-a-crown; very well — the three-and-sixpence is for two buckets of water." Mr. Butler meekly paid the money, without even alluding to the philosophy of the extortion.

"Walk in — walk in — excuse me — but a minute," said Mr. Butler, in broken syllables, shaking with cold, and preceding Buff into a most comfortable parlour, wherein a fire glowed a grateful welcome. The host hurriedly stirred up the coals, and instantly quitted the apartment. Buff, being left alone, silently "unpacked his heart" against the ruffian who had drenched him — then eyed the fire — and, every man believing that he can poke a fire better than his neighbour, again vehemently stirred the coals, and expanded his broad back to the benign influence of the caloric. As it crept up his anatomy, his heart dilated with hopes of good fortune; and his ire against his enemy

began to escape with the steam. "It was well for him I had no shirt," thought Adam. (Simple Buff! it was better for thyself. Thou mightest, it is true, have been declared the conqueror of a drayman — when thy very destitution palmed thee off a victor of thine own passion. The juggling of fortune! when what seems to the unthinking world pure magnanimity, may only be a want of shirt.)

Adam stood, with all the fire at his back, and all his philosophy in his eyes. He surveyed the apartment, furnished with a scrupulous regard to comfort, and thought of his own home in Seven Dials. Struck by the contrast, in the humility of his soul, he felt for a moment a creature of a different species to that inhabiting the nook he stood in. "Thus it is," thought Adam, bending his melancholy eyes upon the glowing carpet — "thus it is, one man walks all his life in silver slippers upon flowers, whilst another — yes, another, better than he," Adam could not suppress the comparison, "treads upon sanded deal from the cradle to the grave. One man is doomed to feed his eyes with luscious pictures"— (Mr. Butler had on his walls some charming dinner-pieces), — "whilst another turns pale at a milk-score." These truisms were unworthy of a philosopher; but then, Adam had had no breakfast: they were certainly beneath a man despising all creature-comforts; but, then, Buff was soaked to the skin. This latter accident was but too evident, for he stood at the fire enveloped in steam. Solomon's genii, released from their brazen vessels, never rose in

clouds of denser vapour: a millowner might have wept to have witnessed such a waste of motive power.

"Bless me! what a smother!" suddenly exclaimed a feminine voice; and Buff, at the sound, cast his coat-tails off his arms, and, coughing, loomed a little out of the surrounding fog. The speaker, seeing it was not the chimney, but a gentleman, who smoked, was about to let fall a curtsey, when Mr. Butler, entering in a hurry, prevented the ceremony. "Mrs. Black, my sister," said the host, "Mr. Buff;" and the introduction over, Mr. Butler, with a warm cloth morning-gown upon his arm, made up to his guest. — "Now, my dear Sir, you had better put off your coat; you see, I — I have changed," and Mr. Butler complacently glanced at his rich ruby-coloured dressing-gown, lined with fur, to his toes — "Come, or you 'll catch your death of cold," and the benignant host pressed the garment upon Adam.

"Cold, Sir?" said Buff, with an inexpressible smile of contempt at the suggestion — "I hope, Sir, I have learned to subdue any such weakness."

"Nay, now, I insist — you are wet through — you *must* take off your coat," said the hospitable Mr. Butler.

Buff put on a still more serious look, assuring his patron, that even if he felt the wet inconvenient — and which he further begged to assure him, he did not — still he would keep on the reeking garment as a matter of principle. "Consider, Sir," said Buff, securing the top button of his coat, and bending his

brow, — "consider, Sir, what a miserable thing is man, if a pint, nay, a quart of water is to distress him. To despise the influence of the elements has ever been my notion of true philosophy. When we think of the Scythians, Sir — of the Parthians — nay, of our own painted progenitors, the ancient Britons — when we reflect on their contempt of the seasons — of the blaze of summer, and the ice of winter — how inexpressibly little does man, that lord of all created things, appear, creeping beneath an umbrella!"

"As you please, Mr. Buff," said Butler, astonished and delighted at the stoicism of his guest, "as you please; though I think you practise a little too severely. For there is no certain proof that even Diogenes did not turn up his barrel when it rained."

"What! wont the gentleman change his coat?" asked Mrs. Black with all the kind surprise of a woman. "Why, he 's very wet," and with a passing shadow on her face she glanced at the stream that had meandered from the coat into the polished steel fender. "Very wet," she repeated.

"Wet!" exclaimed Mr. Butler, unable to repress his benevolence — "aye, I 'm sure, Mr. Buff, you 're wet to the shirt."

Adam spread out his fingers over his heart, and with a firm voice replied, "Not at all, Sir; I assure you, upon my honour — by no means."

"At all events, Mr. Buff, you 'll take a little brandy?" said the philosopher in the furred gown; and as he spoke, the brandy was brought in. Filling

himself a bumper, Mr. Butler pushed the bottle to Adam, who, apparently unconscious of the action, filled his glass. "I assure you, Mr. Buff," and the host looked a world of meaning in the face of his ingenuous guest — "I assure you, the real spirit — there's a curious history about that brandy — I could tell you *how* I got it."

Adam was above vulgar prying; therefore, filling his glass a second time, he gravely observed — "It is worthy of remark, Mr. Butler, that there is no nation so savage, no people so ignorant as to be shut out from the light of distillation."

"Very true, Mr. Buff; it is hereby that the philosopher recognises the natural superiority of the human animal."

"From pine-apples to simplest grasses," continued Buff, calmly sipping the brandy, "man ransacks the whole vegetable kingdom for a false and fleeting enjoyment. The reflection is humiliating," and Adam emptied his glass.

Mr. Butler, absorbed by the merits of his brandy, observed — "It comes direct from France."

"It may have been broached before," said Buff, in allusion to his doctrine.

"Oh, dear no! Don't think it — certainly not," said Mr. Butler, with some vivacity; alive to the virgin character of his liquor. Adam bowed.

By this time, the coat of Adam, attacked by the fire without and the brandy within, became sufficiently dry to insure him from the pressing invitations of Mr.

Butler to change it for another garment; and although Mrs. Black continued to look at the habit, it was not its humidity that attracted her attention. We have before insinuated that Adam's coat, like the cloak of the famous ale-wife, Eleanor Rummin, immortalised by the roughest of court poets, was —

"Wither'd like hay, the wool worn away."

Hence, the lady wondered when her brother informed her that "Mr. Buff would stay to dinner." Indeed, she ventured to cast a look of remonstrance, instantly smiled down by the complacent Mr. Butler, made more than usually genial by French brandy and Siberian fur.

"He is a most extraordinary man — a wonderful man," said Mr. Butler in a low voice to his sister. "You see — you hear — a perfect philosopher," — and the old gentleman pointed triumphantly to Adam, who, seated in an easy chair, his feet stretched out, his hands in his breeches' pockets, and his mouth open, slept and snored profoundly, his senses sweetly shut up by the strong liquor and blazing fire. — "See — he stands on no ceremony; though a perfect stranger, he falls asleep."

"I call it excessively rude," said Mrs. Black.

"What women think rudeness," observed Mr. Butler, "is often the composure of a well-poised mind. Had that man lived in Greece — had he only lived two thousand years ago." —

"I wish he had," said Mrs. Black, and she looked at her steel fender.

"His head would have descended to our mantel-pieces. My dear Betsy, you have no idea of the self-denial of that man." Mrs. Black cast a feminine glance at the brandy-bottle. "None whatever. Had you seen the magnanimity — the utter contempt with which he received a blow — as I live you may observe the mark on the left cheek," —

"Without returning it?" asked Mrs. Black.

"Without condescending to look at the rascal who struck him. And then, when he was wet to the skin — no, I never knew such stoicism — I never" —

At this moment, Adam awoke with a deep-mouthed yawn, and flinging his leg still further out, the whole heel of his shoe came down like an axe upon the tail of a little spaniel, that like a pad of black velvet lay at his foot, and had uncurled its thread-paper queue for the sole purpose of having it chopped upon. The blow being given, the dog, as in duty bound, yelped and howled like forty dogs, and its mistress instantly taking it in her arms, increased its yelping twenty fold. A common man would have been disconcerted at the mischance, the more especially as the injured party was the property of a lady. Buff, however, was above such weakness; for he leisurely raised himself to his full length, and a distant room yet ringing with the cries of the spaniel, he tranquilly remarked to Mr. Butler — "I have often, Sir, been struck by the inequality of fortune suffered by dogs. Here is one, couched upon a pillow — fed with chicken, sweet biscuit, and new milk; caressed and combed, and decked with a silver

collar, yea, sheltered like a baby from the wind and rain; and here is another, harnessed in a truck, fed with offal or fed not at all — beat with the stick of a cruel master," —

"Or kicked with his iron heel," said Butler, drily.

"Or kicked with his iron heel," — repeated the imperturbable Buff — "sleeping on stones, or" —

"Dinner is ready, Sir," said the servant.

Buff immediately left the whole canine race to their varied fortunes, and straightway followed Mr. Butler to the dining-room, where he found a new guest in the person of the family doctor, earnestly pressed by Mrs. Black to stay and dine. Mr. Butler, philosopher as he was, dined just like a common man; and though Adam Buff had shown himself an extraordinary person under other circumstances, at table he was very little above an average feeder. There was but little conversation during the repast, and that taken as a whole not more than ordinarily interesting.

"Mr. Buff, will you favour me with a potato? Stay, they don't seem very choice; and in the article of potatoes," said the philosophic Mr. Butler, "I cannot admit of mediocrity."

"Right, Sir; very right, Sir," said Adam Buff; and then with a severe look — "a potato, Sir, like Cæsar's wife, should not be suspected." Many a judge with a high character for impressiveness, has passed sentence of death with less solemnity than was manifested by Buff in his opinions on potatoes. But, to give Adam 's due, he was one of those rare persons who by their

manner elevate and dignify whatever they condescend to touch upon. Let Buff talk of shrimps, and he would look so big, and talk with such magniloquence, that it would be impossible to think his shrimps a whit smaller than other people's lobsters.

The cloth removed, Buff relaxed a little from his philosophic sternness, and in the playfulness of the moment, proffered an almond-cake to the spaniel, seated on the table immediately before its mistress. The dog — says the naturalist — is a generous animal: there are, however, many exceptions to the rule; nor is it to be wondered at, considering the kind of people amongst whom dogs are sometimes brought up. Now, Mrs. Black's spaniel was famous for its beauty and its ill-temper; never since the birth of folly did any living thing so presume upon its long ears. Hence, when Buff advanced a cake, the spaniel resenting the injuries of its tail, barked most vehemently.

Mr. Butler, looking at the dog and then at Buff, said to the latter — "*Timeo Danaos, et dona ferentes.*"

"Pray, Mr. Buff, don't tease her," said Mrs. Black, "I can't answer for her temper."

"We shall be the best of friends," said Adam, who continued to press the sweet bribe upon the spaniel. Now, Adam, though, as appeared in a former page, an observer of dogs, knew not the extent of their vindictiveness. Thus, he continued to press and press the cake, whilst the eyes of the spaniel were lighted up like two topazes, and its bark grew more dissonant. It was only the work of an instant; but, when Adam

thought, in his pleasant way, to force the cake between the long white teeth of the furious little animal, the creature, stung by the new indignity, sprang forward, and bit Buff through the fleshiest part of his arm. Adam jumped up — but he swallowed the unuttered oath! Mr. Butler looked alarmed; and the professional gentleman mildly inquired, "Has she bitten you, Sir?"

"I knew she would," said Mrs. Black, passing the ears of her favourite through her fingers.

"You had better take off your coat, Sir, and let me look at the arm," said the doctor, and Mrs. Black, still fondling the culprit, rose to retire.

"By no means," said Adam, with vivacity, and begged Mrs. Black to remain. "It's nothing — nothing at all," and, with a very pale face, he swallowed a glass of wine.

"Now, really, Mr. Buff," said the host, "you push your stoicism too far — upon my word you — why, the little beast has drawn blood — yes, she has bitten through your very shirt."

"No, no — not at all — oh, dear no," said Adam, pulling up a smile to his face; whilst Mrs. Black ceased to caress the dog, and looked seriously at Buff.

"Should the animal be mad," remarked the professional man, "I need not, to a gentleman of your intelligence, even hint at the consequences."

"Bless me! Mad! Now, really, Mr. Buff, your coat must come off," said Butler, with great earnestness.

"I am sure, Sir, there is nothing to be alarmed at," said Mrs. Black, having given the dog in charge to her servant to lock up — "nothing at all; yet it would be satisfactory if the doctor were only to look" —

"Don't disturb yourself about it, Madam," replied Adam, very blandly — "I assure you, I don't feel it."

"There is nothing like providing against the worst," said the doctor. "I can cut out the wound and cauterise the flesh, and you'll be comfortable in your mind in five minutes." Adam turned white, red, and yellow at the words.

"Certainly — certainly," said Mr. Butler, "for, only think, if the dog should be mad — now, take off your coat."

"I am sure there is no danger, but" — urged Mrs. Black — "if she should be mad," —

The doctor had taken out his case of instruments, and, with Mr. Butler, was pressing upon Adam; who felt it necessary to make a vigorous demonstration of his will, in order to keep his coat upon his back.

"Gentlemen — Mr. Butler," said Adam, with great earnestness, — "I — I am no believer" — the voice of Adam faltered — "in — in canine madness. I have no faith in it, and will submit to no operation. And even if my opinions were otherwise, I — I could not pay so ill a compliment to Mrs. Black, as to suppose that any dog belonging to that lady could, by any possibility, be out of its senses. I trust, Sir," said Adam to Mr. Butler, at the same time throwing a

side-look at his sister, "I trust, Sir, that when a man takes up philosophy, it is not incumbent upon him that he should lay down gallantry." Adam delivered himself of this in a manner that silenced all opposition. Mr. Butler again took his seat at the table, again considering Adam the first of stoics: the doctor said nothing, but thought the wounded Buff the greatest of fools; whilst Mrs. Black retired from the room, admiring in the generous stranger so wonderful a combination of the nicest delicacy with the strongest fortitude.

CHAPTER III.

"WELL, Betsy, and what is now your opinion of Mr. Buff?" Thus asked Mr. Butler of Mrs. Black, the morning following the assault of the spaniel.

"I trust," said Mrs. Black, evading a direct answer, "that nothing serious will come of the bite. I'm sure I wouldn't let Mr. Buff know the dream I had just before I woke" —

"Dreams! A man like Mr. Buff is no more to be moved by dreams than the Great Pyramid. What was the dream, Betsy?" asked the brother.

"I thought we were all walking down Aldgate, when suddenly Mr. Buff started at the pump, foamed at the mouth, and ran down Fenchurch-street, barking like a dog."

"I never knew such a practical philosopher," said Mr. Butler. "I have met with twenty people who

could talk Zeno, but here is a man who continually acts him. You should have seen the moral majesty with which he received the blow of the drayman. A common man would have stripped and fought."

"Especially of his size," observed Mrs. Black, upon whom the figure of Adam had had its natural weight.

"And then to be soaked through his shirt, and think of it no more than if he had been sprinkled with lavender!" —

"He must have excellent health — yes, he must be very strong," said Mrs. Black.

"And when bitten by a filthy beast of a dog," — continued Mr. Butler.

"I have given it away," interrupted Mrs. Black.

"To think of it no more than the prick of a pin. Nineteen men out of twenty would have gone mad with the mere apprehension of madness. Mr. Buff finished his two bottles with the equanimity of a bishop."

"And then his politeness," urged Mrs. Black. "To refuse to show his wound out of respect to my feelings!"

"There never was such magnanimity," said Mr. Butler.

"Or such sentiment," added Mrs. Black.

"Well, then, Betsy, do you not think Mr. Buff, of all men, the very man to direct and ennoble the disposition of my nephew? Do you not think him the very man for your son?"

Mrs. Black had a still higher opinion of Adam Buff; she thought him the very man for herself; and it was

only three months after the introduction of Buff into the house as philosophic tutor of the little boy, that he became the lawful guide and instructor of his pupil's mother. About a fortnight after the ceremony, Mr. Butler died quite unexpectedly.

Does not the fate of Adam Buff prove that he who is loved by fortune may take no care for a shirt?

We regret to add, that the conduct of the prosperous Adam tended to strengthen what we believe to be the fallacy of ill-nature; namely, that men often flourish from the very want of those merits, for which they are accidentally rewarded.

Adam Buff had not been married six weeks, ere he had been held to bail for beating, with very little provocation, two watchmen and a coalheaver. — He had discharged the favourite servant of his wife for having accidentally sprinkled him with about a spoonful of clean water; and had ordered the Persian cat to be drowned, for that, in pure playfulness, she had struck her talons through his silk stocking, immediately stript from the leg for the eye of the family doctor. And, then, what a life did he lead the laundress! — "I have washed for many, many partic'lar people," said the poor woman, with tears in her eyes, "but never — never — never in all my life did I meet with a gentleman so partic'lar in his shirts as Mr. Buff!"

MATTHEW CLEAR:

THE MAN "WHO SAW HIS WAY."

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THE MAN "WHO SAW HIS WAY."

CHAPTER I.

"WITH such an excellent property, too! Ah, Sir!"

And, as the speaker touched upon property, his voice trembled, and into either eye there stole one large tear, a diamond of the first water.

"Ah, Sir! if Mr. Clear had only seen into himself; for with such a property!" —

The truth is, Matthew, though the dimmest owl, had, in his own conceit, the vision of an eagle. The snail that carries its eyes at the end of its horns had not a more projective look. Seeing nothing, he could to his own satisfaction peer into the very essences of things. But presuming with the reflective gentleman above — we shall duly return to him — that Matthew never did descend into himself, shall we not pause ere we wonder at or blame him? Did you, Sir, ever descend into a coal-mine, a tin-mine, or, for you have the look of a traveller, into a salt-mine at Cracow? Surely there must be a sudden suspension of the breath — a rigidity of the fingers clinging to the thing that

hurries us from the light of heaven — a dizzying fear of what we go to meet? Yet what is all this — what this sinking below some hundred feet of earth to the solemn descent of a man within himself? What is this going through antediluvian strata in the darkest and most dangerous hour, to the awful sinking into our own soul? There may be green grass flourishing at the very mouth of the mine — flowers blossoming about it — but what, what is below? As we sink are we not astonished at the gloom? See we not incrustations of the meanest things where we thought we hoarded gems; and, arrived at the bottom where we hoped for a stream of living water, and a ray of comfortable light, we find no drop to wet our withered lips — and our heart palsied with dread — we grope in darkness, in substantial night?

Matthew Clear was the sole son of a wise stock-broker. But though he inherited his father's money, he did not come into the paternal sagacity whereof the cash was the golden fruit. It is true, Matthew possessed from nature an inexhaustible fund of conceit, which only wanted good luck to be received and registered as penetration. Falling, as our story will show, upon evil days, men scrupled not to call him a fool, when — had only another card turned up — he had, with the self-same faculties, been dubbed a sage. Such, however, is the fate of mortal man — such the opposite rewards that wait on chance! Luck, mere luck, may make even madness wisdom. Our Matthew was not lucky.

At eight-and-twenty, Matthew had not, if we except the possession of ten thousand pounds, a single care in the world. Rich, and without relatives, he stood aloof, bright and lonely as a gilt weathercock. For business — direct business, he had no genius. Indeed, such deficiency was in his case to be expected. His father, — good buried man! had toiled through fifty years of life — had been especially ordained and appointed to make money for an only son, the said only son being on his part expressly begotten for the single purpose of spending the accumulated thrift.

We know not a more interesting object than an unsuspecting young man, left alone in this world of temptations, with ten thousand pounds. Who would not rather hug secure mendicity? The beggar lies by the road-side, and, like a lizard on a bank, basks in the sun, a careless vagabond; but where the refuge, where the tranquillity for the hapless animal born to civet? To the simple inheritor of thousands, there is open to him only one dreadful way to seeming peace. Soon, very soon, Matthew became certain of this truth; for he was speedily hunted, and at the same time, by two mature spinsters and three experienced widows. Five women! and Matthew, be it remembered, was only eight-and-twenty.

"Most beautiful diamonds!" cried Matthew, as he received a necklace from a thin, long, rather yellowish feminine hand: "most beautiful diamonds!" and he looked at the effulgent bait with his one peculiar look, ever called up when he wished to see his way.

Matthew lolled on a couch in the handsome room of a most handsome and particularly respectable boarding-house: near him, at his very fingers'-ends, sat a timid, sallow daughter of Eve. Though the lady looked emphatically thirty-four, sure we are she was but thirty-three. In a word, she was a most plain woman, most elaborately accomplished. Yes; Miss Julia Lac possessed the surest, the most lasting beauty. Lips wax pale — skin turns — eyes grow dim, but the mathematics endure for ever. What is fragile loveliness, looking as though it lived on lilies? Now Julia Lac was a virgin roll of human papyrus.

Still Matthew sat, and — the necklace hanging across his sinister palm — he still continued to see his way. Would we might paint the thousand objects that floated before him! We must content ourselves with a few women, all of whom, curtseying and bridling, looked wedding-rings at Matthew. Now, one with most significant finger would point to a very respectable freehold, duly parcelled into woodland, stream, and meadow: she and the scene would pass, and enter a second candidate, carrying as a scroll, a bank security. A third — a fourth appeared; and Matthew sat intently seeing his way. Rapt, he lightly passed his thumb along the necklace; and, as at the touch of an enchanter, there rose before him a most ravishing prospect. All that India boasts of rich and beautiful beamed upon him. He saw fairy-land, with all the countless wealth of Solomon, and his legendary genii. And there, by a spell, was transported the lady from his side. There,

the queen of that radiant, teeming spot, stood Julia Lac; who, with one hand upon her maiden heart, and the other pointing to her property, said very audibly, at least to Matthew — for love has at times long ears — "This and these are thine!" Matthew winked, and when he looked again — miraculous vision! — he saw himself enthroned in highest state upon the whitest elephant.

We assure the reader that Matthew saw all, and more, much more, than this: yet, in his own niggard, constant phrase, he had only seen his way. Of this truth we could print the strongest certificate, namely, the certificate of Matthew's marriage with Miss Lac; an event to be dated only three weeks and some days from the time of his day-dream. All his acquaintance called Matthew a happy man; he denied not the imputation, but would droop one eyelid, duck his chin, and briefly sum up the attractions of Mrs. Clear by more than insinuating that before he committed matrimony he had — seen his way.

Self-surrendered, the intoxicated couple quitted London, winging their way to a rustic, myrtle shade, for the honey month. Mrs. Clear, even at the end of the four weeks, with the most flattering susceptibility, assured her husband that she could dwell there for ever. How loathsome was the town become to her — how poor — how frivolous — how hollow! Why, at least, for another month, should they quit the dear retreat? Matthew's blood glowed, — simmered with happiness at such appeals; he was suffused to the very

nails with hymeneal satisfaction; but Julia must not forget — there were matters to be settled — she had received no letters about the property — and, for the sake, not only of themselves — and Matthew looked with a gay wickedness into his wife's eyes — for the sake, not only of themselves, — this he repeated, expanding with the tautology — they could not continue to go on there in the dark. Matthew meant they must see their way.

CHAPTER II.

With a thousand silent adieus to Honeycomb, did Mrs. Clear resign herself to the chaise; for, as she beautifully said, her heart was held by the very jessamine. Arrived in London, the married pair found fervent congratulations subsided into tepid compliments, and were soon abandoned to their own resources. In seven weeks, the happy couple were become reasonable man and wife, as the following breakfast dialogue will certify: —

"My love," said Matthew, "I thought you had given that filthy bird away?"

Thus spake the husband, as a loud laugh and a libertine exclamation from a great grey parrot split upon the ear of the complaining helpmate.

"My dear," returned the wife, with conjugal indifference, "is it my fault if I find Nabob so essential to my happiness?"

Another shrieking laugh from the great grey parrot.

"Happiness!" cried Matthew, as though the wife of his soul had spoken something treasonous to the marriage state. "Happiness!" and Matthew jerked his chair, looking wonder at the audacity of woman.

"Ha! ha! ha!" chuckled the parrot; "ha! ha! ha! Hooked him, by —!"

Perhaps this is the place to give a brief history of Nabob. The bird, when very young, had been presented to Mrs. Clear by a handsome Company's officer, who survived the gift barely a month, being carried off by a native fever of India. On the lady's passage to England, the bird attracted the attentions of the captain of the maintop, and Julia being an invalid, Nabob was surrendered to the care of his admirer. Mr. John Rogers had a tender heart, and a sure hand. Like all sailors, he was born the natural enemy of a shark. Every idle moment would he lay in wait for his foe; and, on such occasions, Nabob was never absent. We have said John Rogers was expert; he was also somewhat vain-glorious; for, never did he strike a shark, but he roared and shouted — "Ha! ha! ha! Hooked him, by —!" What was to be expected of a parrot of any capacity perched on the cathead, continually listening to these notes of conquest? The bird was no dull scholar; and in less than three weeks, to the admiration of the crew, and we must admit, to the passing disquietude of his mistress, the parrot laughed and shouted in the very key of the triumphant angler. It is true, that, in the brief day of courtship, Mrs. Clear resolved to part with

Nabob; indeed, twice or thrice, when Matthew pressed his suit, the chuckle and the exclamation of the creature broke somewhat dissonantly on the conference, making Matthew pause, and reddening the cheeks of the fluttering spinster. But in the final interview, when Matthew boldly made the offer, and, breathless, stood waiting life or death — to be anticipated in her reply by the ever-laughing, ever-shouting bird, passed the temper of the kindest mistress. As an earnest of her future obedience to Matthew, she declared herself content to sacrifice Nabob. Then, the lady was Miss Julia Lac: now, was she Mrs. Matthew Clear.

"Madam, how is it possible? I say, how is it possible," —

A great statesman, in his advice to young ambassadors, counsels them to take snuff: when sticking for a word, or wanting a moment to baffle a query, the box, as he insinuates, gracefully assists the hesitating. Matthew, failing in syllables, and not being a taker of snuff, threw himself upon a muffin. Mrs. Clear could not speak, but, turning her head with extreme dignity from Nabob to her husband, she looked a very thick volume. We say she could not speak; for at the moment she held between her lips a lump of sugar — the sixth — for the epicurean beak of the parrot! Sympathetic reader, imagine a seven weeks' wife staring at you with withering reproof in her eyes, and a lump of sugar held mockingly between her teeth! For Matthew, the vision of a death's-head biting a cross-bone had not so confounded him.

The breakfast was nearly finished, when the servant appeared with two letters. Being directed to his master, they were handed to his mistress. Mrs. Clear broke a seal. Had she at the same time broken her heart, she could not have published the damage by a louder shriek. Matthew jumped upright, and ran, or rather slid, to his suffering wife. The poor soul was blue-white with anguish! He was about to fold her in his arms, when, with a subtle power borrowed from grief, she repelled his attention, at the same time depositing him on a distant sofa. Matthew drew his breath, and, though he stared, for once could not see his way. Mrs. Clear, recovering her self-possession, cried — "wretch!"

The tale must be told. The fatal letter was from a lawyer intrusted with the repair of the wounded affections of one of the ladies to whom Matthew, as a gentleman, was contracted. The lady, being deserted by one man, had no other remedy than an appeal to twelve. Plainly, the action was commenced; and the damages due to the heart of the forsaken were moderately estimated at three thousand pounds. What was left to Mrs. Clear but to exclaim "wretch?" Had Matthew from the first impressed upon his future wife the sacrifices he was ready to venture — had he only hinted to her the possibility of other claimants — she would, we are convinced, have exhibited her magnanimity, and, spite of all, have wedded him. But to be tricked into marrying a man with six or seven hearts bleeding

at every pore about him, what woman of delicacy could placidly endure it?

Left alone, for Mrs. Clear had retired for another handkerchief, Matthew began to calculate all the chances. Damages might be flatteringly heavy; there might, possibly, be more than one action — women were so vindictive! Still, had he not, with every deduction made, married the richest of the five? Were not the Indian possessions of his wife — were not her jewels more than trebly worth the best of any other offer? Matthew smiled in self-affirmation; bobbed his head; rubbed his hands. All things considered, he was fully convinced that he had — seen his way.

"In this sweet mood," as the poet sings, Matthew cast a glance at the second letter, yet unopened. With a slight tremor, he broke the seal; and as he broke it, Mrs. Clear, with vermilion eyes, re-entered. Matthew, unconscious of the presence of his injured, yet attentive wife, read on. In a second, Matthew, his cheeks, like lead, exclaimed — no! we will not sully our paper with so prodigious an oath. The reader, however, must not think it was lost upon Mrs. Clear, for had the demon of mischief suddenly clawed her husband through the floor, we doubt whether she would have screamed so loudly — whether, clasping her hands and sinking upon the chair, she would have portrayed such eloquent dismay! Nevertheless, the unshaken Matthew approached his astonished wife, and, striking the letter with what old Fuller calls a "dead hand," he puts this unadorned, this naked query, to

the partner of his fortune and his bed: "In the name of the devil, Ma'am, what is this?"

"Mr. Clear!" cried the lady, all her spirits conjured to her eyes by the diabolic exhortation.

"Look here, Ma'am; I am written to for five hundred pounds for a diamond necklace!"

"Well, Mr. Clear?"

"Well? Why, I know you showed me a necklace, but — eh? — it can't be?"

"You said the diamonds were very beautiful, and — and I took your judgment."

"Judgment! D—it, Ma'am!" (Mrs. Clear shuddered) — "Weren't they your own?"

Mrs. Clear, curving her neck gracefully as any swan, said "No."

"No! What! not some of your extraordinary diamonds — not some of the family jewels?" roared Matthew, and he looked aghast. Not getting a reply, again he shouted — "Not your own?"

"No."

"Ha! ha! ha! Hooked him, by —!" was the unpremeditated, and untimely proclamation of the artless parrot.

Matthew, seizing a knife, glared with the eyes of a butcher at the bird, which, as conscious of the murderous intent, flew to the extended arms of its mistress. Matthew stood a moment, then fell, as though stabbed to the heart, into a chair. He waxed white and red — cold and hot — played with his fingers upon the table — vehemently rubbed his calf — twitched his

neck-cloth — and then, with an air of settled desperation, ventured to look for further particulars into the face of his wife, at the time assiduously pressing the seventh lump on the self-denying parrot. Matthew groaned.

Now, Matthew was not a man to groan without good and sufficient reason; for though few moments had elapsed since the eloquent burst of Nabob, yet had Matthew, struck by the omen, reviewed a thousand circumstances, solved a dozen riddles, tallied fact with fact, questioned, answered, compared, deduced. What he had lost, with what he had not won, came in terrible contrast upon him; and assured that he had not — seen his way, he groaned! But, it may be urged against him — to grudge a necklace to a wealthy bride, to a woman dowered with almost an Indian province, was the malice of a miser. Very true; yet, by some subtle association, the necklace was to Matthew a connecting link with all the Oriental possessions of his spouse; that gone, he was superstitious enough to give up all beside for lost. In such despair — and though man and wife are but one flesh — he viewed his unoffending partner with the eye of a cannibal. Now no woman less deserved such a look.

"Five hundred pounds for diamonds for *that* neck!" and Matthew ground every syllable with his teeth — "Ugh! I'd sooner lay out the money in blisters."

Mrs. Clear started up; and, like a woman of real sensibility, burst into tears.

Matthew was left alone with the parrot. Nabob evidently felt the delicacy of his situation; for cocking his head, leering his eye, and working his black tongue, he edged himself sidelong from the extended fingers of Matthew, like a vulture, seeking to truss him. Securing the door, that he might the more surely effect his sinister design, Matthew stealthily pursued Nabob, who hopped from chair to sofa — from sofa to table — from table to fire-screen, evading his follower, until, enveloped in a shawl of his mistress, flung over him with gladiatorial precision by his master, he was soon panting in the hands of the destroyer. Certain we are, that Nabob had resigned himself to sudden death; at his neck he already felt the merciless thumb and finger. "Not body's death but body's banishment," determined the clement Matthew; and, lifting up the window, he delivered himself of a most pestilent remembrancer. Ere Matthew was well ensconced in his dressing-room, Nabob, from the summit of a neighbour's chimney, was contemplating a trial flight to the Surrey hills.

CHAPTER III.

When a man is not to be convinced by an earthquake, what argument can successfully be applied to him? Vain was it that Mrs. Clear assured her enquiring mate that the late terrible convulsion (it was very minutely described in all the journals,) had swallowed up every rupee of her Indian property, leaving her

nothing in the world save a lively trust in the affections of a husband. Matthew remained a sceptic; for, though his wife discovered the greatest anxiety on every new arrival, expressing a hope that something might be saved, Matthew would grin incredulously, asking her if her memory would serve to make an inventory of her losses? As the earthquake had proved such a timely friend, it had doubtless not taken all? These sneers he would urge with unrelenting assiduity; but Mrs. Clear — high-minded woman! — disdained to reply to the insinuations. Calmly, and with touching resignation, she would, on such occasions, raise her eyes to heaven, and ask, "What sins she had committed to be married to an atheist?"

All this time Miss Camilla Brown — such was the name of the injured plaintiff — slept not on her wrongs. It is true that, mollified by Mr. Downy, the pacific solicitor of Matthew, the lady entertained certain hints at a compromise. Downy had a heart of honey, and a tongue of silver; a gentle, persuasive, excellent little man, with a real friendship for his client, whom he had known from a boy.

"Ha!" Matthew was wont to soliloquise, "had I not kept my marriage secret from Downy, he had enquired for deeds, and then — and then" — and then, we can take it upon ourselves to affirm, Miss Lac had still remained an unplucked bud.

"Well, Mat," said Downy, at his last conference, "I 've made the best of bad. I — where 's your wife?"

"Gone to Dorking," replied Matthew, impatient of the superfluous query.

"Dorking again! But I come on business. I 've offered the plaintiff five hundred pounds, and I think she 'll listen to reason."

"No doubt," said Matthew, drily, "'t is a good round sum for the trouble."

"I tell you, Mat," urged Downy, in a soft yet impressive tone, "if she goes into court with those letters, you 're not safe for a thousand."

"If I had but seen my way, I had never written," said Clear with unnecessary emphasis. "That a man should lift a pen against himself! 'T is a sort of suicide," moralised the defendant. "Five hundred pounds! Well, if I must, I must." — Downy nodded satisfaction. — "But if ever I have a son!" —

Downy turned his grey eye on Matthew; then, looking upwards, stared at the portrait of Mrs. Clear. Matthew felt the look to be ingeniously murderous; for it slew the unbegotten. From that hour, Matthew never had the hardihood to enjoy even a possible child.

"I suppose," said Downy, "you have heard that Mrs. Melon, and" —

"Another action?" asked the conscience-stricken Matthew.

"No, she 's married — so you 're safe from her. But your young widow, Mrs. Undercrust" — (Matthew gasped) — "Ha! that was a miss, indeed!"

"Phew! She hadn't a penny certain."

"No; but now her uncle 's dead," —

"Dead! Confound it," said Matthew, and he looked ready to weep, "now she must be very comfortable."

"They say, fifteen thousand," remarked Downy, who unconsciously again glanced at the portrait of Mrs. Clear; then recollected himself — took up his hat — gave a silent squeeze to Matthew, and left him to the sharp reproach of broken protestations.

One morning, some weeks after the visit of Downy, Matthew sat in his easy chair, exhibiting a most perturbed and anxious countenance. Mrs. Clear was from home; by the way, she was gone to Dorking. From his looks, it was certain that Matthew could not see his way. He took up a book — he threw it down — he paced the room — he stared into the street. At length, he went out. Having wandered in St. James's Park a couple of hours, he returned home. After the lapse of two more hours, the servant announced —

"Mr. Felix!"

Matthew jumped up to meet the visitor, but immediately sank again into his chair. Truth to say, ill luck never had a more significant retainer than Mr. Felix. He looked with a dead black eye on Matthew — shook a sharp, white face — elevated his shoulders, and said, or rather croaked, "Mr. Clear, I am very, very sorry" —

"Lost? lost?" asked Matthew, suffocated with anxiety.

We may here inform the reader that Mr. Felix was formerly head-clerk to Mr. Downy; and that his present object was to inform Matthew of the verdict — not ten minutes returned by a conscientious jury, in the case of Brown *versus* Clear. The reader will remember that we spoke of a compromise. Certain it is, that the plaintiff, won by Downy, had consented to take five hundred pounds with costs: the money was to be paid the next day, when Mr. Felix, who had recently set up for himself, assured Matthew that if brought into court, the plaintiff, left to his adroitness, would not recover a sixpence. To this he pledged even his reputation. Matthew — seeing his way — broke with his old friend Downy, and gave the case to Mr. Felix, who again and again, in his own graphic and anatomical phrase, declared that "Miss Brown had not a leg to stand upon."

"These things *will* happen," said the comforting Mr. Felix; "the damages" —

Matthew, in a state of strangulation, gasped — "How much?"

"One thousand five hundred pounds!"

The features of Matthew changed like a dying dolphin. "One thousand, five — why — you told me, — yes, you swore, she hadn't a leg to stand upon."

"As a lawyer, Sir, I was justified in the assumption; but after what had passed between you and Miss Brown, you, Sir, must have known better."

"Passed — between — us?"

"Oh, Mr. Clear! a case of rock couldn't stand against such letters. Not a dry eye in court; even his lordship moved; and three times the counsel stopped to recover himself. Seven ladies fainting, and three in strong hysterics, taken from the gallery. How could you write such letters?"

With this interrogative, and a passing complaint of great exhaustion, Mr. Felix departed to dine.

(Though we anticipate the event a few weeks, we will here state, as an evidence of the mighty power of love, making the lion to lie down with the lamb, — that such was its influence over Mr. Felix, that, though previously opposed to Miss Brown, he subsequently married the lady, wisely adding his own bill of costs to her private damages.)

To return to Matthew, who sat staring and stunned. The unequivocal triumph of his epistolary talents, weighed with him not a feather against fifteen hundred pounds. At length Matthew began to vociferate. "Fool! fool! And when I thought I saw my way! Fifteen hundred! fifteen! and then the costs! Oh Lord! In all, two thousand pounds! Two thousand! How Downy will triumph! how he 'll chuckle! how he 'll exclaim" —

"Ha! ha! ha! Hooked him, by —!"

Matthew stood transfixed. Was it "but a wandering voice," or was it, indeed, Nabob in the flesh? Another laugh dispelled all doubt; Matthew, opening

the door of an inner room, beheld the bird of evil omen; beheld —

"Tippoo, my dear, where 's your bow?"

Thus spake Mrs. Clear to a fat little boy of about eight years old, with glittering dark eyes, coal-coloured hair, and a primrose complexion. The docile infant drew up to Matthew, greeting him with a truly oriental salutation. Matthew, without the slightest return of the elaborate civility, glared at his wife. Mrs. Clear, with an amiable attempt at conversation, taking off her bonnet, observed, "she had been to Dorking." This she said in a tone of explanation to the bewildered look of her husband, who, however, was far from satisfied with the intelligence. "He knew — she was always going to Dorking — but — who — who the devil was Tippoo?" His wife, with a confidence peculiar to herself, explained.

"A burden had long weighed upon her heart; she could no longer live beneath the pressure. Tippoo was a helpless orphan. She had long known his unhappy parents: she might almost say his mother and herself, bred together, were one. In his last moments, she had promised the father to nourish and protect the little Tippoo. She had brought the dear infant to England — had placed him with a nurse at Dorking. But for the visitation of providence, which had swept away her property (she hoped, however, she had resignation), out of her own means, she would have reared and educated the little love; but

since the earthquake" — but here, weeping was triumphant.

Though the presence of Tippoo was thus satisfactorily explained, the sudden advent of Nabob still remained a mystery. There never was so lucky an accident! Tippoo, during his residence at Dorking, much frequented the society of certain mercenary naturalists abounding in that neighbourhood; we speak of bird-catchers. On the morning of the day of Mrs. Clear's last visit, Nabob, keeping jocund company with rustic linnets and plebeian sparrows, was caught in a net with a dozen of his low friends, and immediately recognised and claimed by the delighted Tippoo. A guinea rewarded the bird-catcher: and thus Mrs. Clear in one day repossessed herself of all (except her husband) she held dear in the world, — Tippoo the orphan, and Nabob the parrot.

Mrs. Clear had heard of the verdict; and though considerably shocked at the sum, besides being much hurt at the warm, libertine tone of her husband's epistles, her conduct on the occasion was all but angelic. Mrs. Clear breathed nought but comfort and content. Perhaps the genial season had its influence. It was a lovely July night, and Matthew was melted.

"Indeed, it was a heavy sum; but a cheerful economy would soon replace it. And, after all, what an escape! Eor what," exclaimed Mrs. Clear, with a look of horror, "what, my dear Matthew, if you had married such a woman!"

Matthew sat on the sofa, one hand beside him, the other thrust beneath his waistcoat. On his immediate right sat his wife in a novel position. She had both arms about her husband's neck, with her eyes following his eyes. On Matthew's left knee, after much unseen assistance on the part of Julia, sat little Tippoo, all his faculties absorbed by a large scarlet apple. At an end of the sofa was perched Nabob, silently devouring buttered toast, a vegetable he had much missed in the fields of Surrey.

"Is he not a sweet fellow?" asked Mrs. Clear, turning her husband's head to Tippoo. "And then so mild — so tractable! Yes, Matthew, he will — he must win upon you; you will find in the dear child a son" — (Matthew cast up his glassy eyes toward the portrait,) — "an affectionate son; and, yes, you will be to him as a loving father?" Matthew sat with his tongue like a stone in his mouth. "Eh, Mathew?" and Mrs. Clear continued with every query to tighten her arms about her husband's neck. "Eh, Matthew?" At length, in self-defence, for a dark tinge stole upon the good man's cheek, Matthew uttered a sound which Julia confidingly received for "yes."

"I knew you would; and you will foster him, and educate him as a gentleman, and provide for his future wants in this stormy, wicked life — eh, Matthew?" and Julia's arms were still at Matthew's neck. "Eh, Matthew? I say, eh, Matthew?" and Mrs. Clear raised her voice with every question, squeezing, too, with growing force. — "Eh, Matthew?"

This time, Matthew becoming decidedly purple, cried loudly — "Yes, yes!"

"Ha! ha! ha! hooked him, by —!" and the parrot finished his buttered toast.

CHAPTER IV.

THE expenses of the law-suit, various debts contracted by Mrs. Clear in her maidenhood, together with the professional education of Tippoo, in a few years reduced Matthew's ten thousand pounds to little less than four. Unhappily, Mrs. Clear, for all her solitary hint at cheerful saving, had not learned "to sink with dignity." Until awakened by the ring of the last guinea, she lived in the delusion of the unbroken ten thousand. It is true, her imagination was tinged with oriental extravagance; much was to be allowed for her breeding; though Matthew, we grieve to say, was quite devoid of the necessary charity. Nay, sorry are we to add, that as he lost his money, he lost his temper; as he became poor, he became less endurable. Indeed, so surely did his manners fall with his purse, that when suddenly deprived of every shilling, he appeared — aye, even to many of his warmest friends — an incorrigible monster.

"Very well, Mr. Clear, very well; you know best: but sure am I that Simpson's a villain." Thus, with feminine foresight, one day prophesied Mrs. Clear. Matthew, seeing his way, smiled contemptuously: and

though he spoke not, he felt, to his own satisfaction, more than a match for Simpson. Had he condescended to reply, he might, we think, have ventured a like ingenuous vaunt to that really proclaimed by a modern master of the revels.

"Beware, Sir, beware of that Mr. Bradford," whispered the friendly warning. "Sir," replied the mirror of managers, with an air and look of questioned genius, — "Sir, Mr. Bradford may think himself a cunning rogue; but, Sir," and the speaker towered and dilated with a consciousness of power, as he coined the expressive comparative, — "but, Sir, he shall find that I can be a cunninger."

"Ha! what? Simpson — why, the very man in my thoughts," said Matthew, as Simpson made his appearance; "humph! sit down." But Matthew, despite his hospitable address, looked ill at ease. His eye fell from the face of Simpson, and now, wandered, quite unconsciously, to Mrs. Clear's portrait; and now, dwelt sleepily upon the carpet. Julia rose from her seat; and, uttering half-a-dozen eloquent footsteps, quitted the room; we say eloquent, for even the dull, the guileless Simpson, understood the disdain conveyed in them.

Matthew sat, as though his chair became every moment hotter and hotter; and his face, glowing from a dirty yellow into a dingy red, betrayed the increasing warmth. On the other hand, Simpson showed a countenance of stone. Observing the confusion of his friend,

he, with exemplary politeness, silently awaited his convenience. Preluding the act by a short cough, Matthew jerked his chair, took the hand of Simpson, and squeezing it with the fervour of a Pythias, said or sighed — "My dear Simpson, I am so sorry," —

"Not a word — not a syllable, my dear friend. Since you can't oblige me with the thousand," —

"Between ourselves, my dear boy, the extravagance of Mrs. Clear is — but no, not even to you should I — can I — expose my own wife. I thought I had the money — I" —

"I wish you had, with all my soul. But, at once to put you out of agony, I am come to tell you, that I don't want it."

If, before, Matthew warmly pressed the hand of his friend, he could at this moment have embraced him. Yes, no sooner had Simpson declared his independence, than Matthew would have done anything to serve him.

"Indeed," added Simpson, after a brief pause, "'t was very lucky that we didn't purchase" —

"Lucky!" cried Matthew, and his jaw worked like the jaw of a corpse galvanised; — "lucky"

"Very lucky; for, you must know," — and here Simpson lowered his voice, took out his box, and impartially showering the snuff up either nostril, continued with syllabic distinctness, — "you must know, that the bonds we were to buy together, have to-day gone down to nothing." So saying, Simpson vanished

from the room, leaving Matthew fixed in a chair, an exanimate pauper.

A few words will tell the rise and progress of this domestic tragedy. Simpson and Matthew were bosom — nay, as Simpson thought, pocket-friends. Thus, when Simpson, speaking on the best secret information, assured Matthew that a timely purchase of certain bonds must inevitably "lead to fortune," and consequently to fame, — at the same time, asking for the golden intelligence, the temporary loan of a thousand to participate in the venture, Matthew, in a rapture of gratitude, and with a religious exclamation, promised the cash. However, Matthew was no sooner left alone, than he began to see his way. Why should he pay so dearly for mere advice? Why should not he himself reap the harvest of his own thousand? The tempter of man triumphed over friendship; for, incited by the devil, Matthew invested every shilling of his fortune in the aforesaid securities, wholly unmindful of the thousand pounds sacredly pledged to the believing Simpson! Thus, seeing his way, Matthew looked upon stark beggary. We think Simpson had an inkling of the sudden destitution of his friend; we believe it, from the calm, cold manner with which he touched upon the fall of the bonds; from the spark of malice that lighted his dull eye as he glided from the apartment.

What was left to Matthew? In no man was the love of country more deeply rooted; and yet, on the shortest notice was he prepared to wean himself from

England — to cross the sea — to become an alien and a wanderer. Yes; without breathing a word about the vision, he clearly saw his way to New York. It may prove the worth of Matthew, when we assure our readers that many, many in London, inquired most earnestly of his prospects. Matthew employed, as he conceived, the surest means to baffle such amiable curiosity. Indeed, believing himself unequal to the pang, he even took no formal leave of his wife; but promised himself, when he should have seen his way across the Atlantic, to — to send for her. Fortunately, the day he withdrew himself from his home, Mrs. Clear was gone with a party to the London Docks. He had merely told her, that for a few days he should be absent in the country.

It was about a fortnight after this separation, that the fast-sailing ship, "The Good Intent," lay off Spithead: all was prepared; in a few minutes she would put out to sea. A boat approached the ship, containing a passenger, a Mr. Bustard, whose berth had been duly selected and paid for by a friend in the London Docks. The voyager mounted the side; but, no sooner was he upon deck, than a shriek — a piercing female screech — thrilled the very timbers of "The Good Intent." The men paused motionless at the ropes; the passengers stared, transfixed; but what was the surprise — the indignation of all on board — when a woman rushed to the new-comer, fell "like a guilty thing" at his feet, and with clasped hands, running eyes, and cracking voice, exclaimed —

"Forgive me, Matthew! — pray, forgive me! I don't deserve that you should have followed me! Indeed, I don't! But, forgive me, my only Clear — and I will — I will go back with you!"

Reader, it was even so. Peter Bustard, cabin passenger, was no other than the defaulter, Matthew Clear. And most unluckily, two individuals — their boat lay astern — expressly commissioned to search "The Good Intent" or any other vessel, for the fugitive, convinced by the words of Julia that they had caught their prey, instantly pounced upon it, and having satisfied Captain Rogers of the legality of the act, proceeded to carry Matthew and his luggage into their private bark. Indeed, Captain Rogers, though evidently interested in the fate of Matthew — was too wise an officer — too good a seaman — to question lawful authority. Otherwise, he had never risen from the rank of captain of the main-top to the command of his present ship; for, by the strangest accident in life, Mrs. Clear, when a spinster, had sailed to England with the very Rogers, in whose "Good Intent" she was now a favoured passenger.

Matthew was hurried into the boat; his wife, breathless with anxiety, watched him safely seated between the officers. Of course, she expected an invitation to join the party; but Matthew deigned no look, no word to the forsaken. Her magnanimity at the spousal neglect was truly beautiful. She descended to the cabin with the dignity of an injured empress; and from

the stern window, with a bottle of hartshorn at her nose, contemplated the "lessening boat."

For two or three minutes a deep silence reigned throughout the ship; and the very sea, the breeze, seemed hushed in sympathy with the silent sorrow, the wrongs of Matthew. All, save the oars, was profoundly at rest, when a high, shrill note came over the waters from "The Good Intent," — a sound driven "like a sword of fire" into the ears of Matthew — a voice that cried through the serene air — across the glassy wave —

"Ha! ha! ha! Hooked him, by —!"

It was not to be supposed that Mrs. Clear could cross the Atlantic without Nabob. Like the sweet little cherub, the parrot was aloft, perched on a rope of the departing vessel.

CHAPTER V.

Law and private malice did their worst; and Matthew grew old and lived a beggar. It is true, in the fondness of his heart he would continue to see his way; but then he looked through rags, and the world had lost its glory. He was open to any offer; but fortune only sneered at his readiness. In the humility of his soul he thought nothing upon this dirty earth too foul to touch, and yet he walked with empty hands. Alone in the world — for he possessed certain evidence of the demise of Mrs. Clear at Philadelphia — he had

little to live for, but found it difficult to live. Often, seeing his way, he looked directly at the poorhouse. And what added scorpions to his daily wants, was the prosperity of early acquaintances — of men with no more eyes than moles; men, who in truth had never seen their way, and who, notwithstanding, had jogged dully and prosperously on. Harassed, disgusted, weary of breath, Matthew paused in a desolate hour at a book-stall; and, thumbing over a volume of Plutarch, nerved by heroic examples, he resolved on self-slaughter.

Behold Matthew, with but one sixpence — and that begged from an old acquaintance — in his pocket; houseless — hopeless; his coat in tatters; a ventilating rent in his breeches; melancholy eating his heart; a November sky — a November rain; and a hole in either shoe! Is not this an hour in which a man could lie down in a coffin as in a bed? In which he could gather himself to sleep — wrap even a parish shroud about him as he would wrap a warm great coat — compose his arms upon his breast, and then fall smiling off into death — smiling at the running, scraping, stamping, shuffling, still to continue over his head, by the lackeys, the flatterers, the debaters, the jugglers of the world above? So thought Matthew! Thus saw he his way into the grave, and looking back at what he had to leave, the wormy pit seemed to him a warm, comfortable couch; eider-down at the bottom, and silken curtains at the sides.

Matthew, pondering the means, decided in favour of

arsenic. Composing himself to a look of indifference, he entered the handsome shop of an apothecary. "What may you want?" —

Matthew paused, and a tremor thrilled him from crown to sole. "What may you want?"

"A — a — a dose of salts," answered Matthew. The salts were delivered, the money paid, and Matthew was again in the street. The reader may marvel at the vacillation of the self-doomed, who, seeking deadly poison, asks for a salutary aperient. We not know whether we can satisfactorily solve the riddle: but this we know; that Matthew, casting up his eyes, beheld in the prosperous apothecary, the helpless, and, as he afterwards turned out, the ungrateful, arrogant Tippoo; the boy, whom — held to his pledge by Mrs. Clear — Matthew had "fostered and educated as a gentleman, and provided for in this stormy, wicked life." Meeting his looks, Matthew thought he was recognised; and whether — for pride is a mysterious agent — he would not suffer Tippoo to suspect that his foster-father was so abased that nought was left him but to die, or whether Matthew had really repented of his wickedness, we cannot decide. We can only assure the reader that, eschewing poison, he asked for salts; and the medicine, in his possession, he was too good an economist to fling it away. No, he swallowed it; and, strange to relate, in four-and-twenty hours, he saw his way with very different eyes. Thus, salts may be fatal to romance.

Matthew drudged and drudged, and sank and sank. He, who, on the outset of life, saw his way over its proudest heights, its richest plains, now, with contracted vision, hung over the books of a sordid master, a withered usurer. However, as the miser was much older than Matthew, as he had no kindred, and was bountiful in his professions towards his sole, his confidential, and his half-starved clerk, Matthew, in bright moments, would see his way to the muckworm's fortune. Hence, was he all devotion and ductility. Thus, when his master testified to any circumstance, it was all-sufficient for Matthew: though he himself should have forgotten the matter, yet was his confidence so great in the veracity of his employer, that he had no hesitation in swearing to it. A law-suit illustrated the fidelity of Matthew.

A certain spendthrift deeply indebted to the advances of the money-merchant, had the dishonourable audacity to contest the claims of the lender. The suit was involved in many niceties; and what was worse, it fell at a time when Matthew's master was in the hands of the physician, who, to the anxious inquiries of the clerk, shook a death's head. The pain of the sick man's disease only aggravated his desire of vengeance. To Matthew he left the evidence of the case, narrating various incidents which, described upon what Matthew believed to be a bed of death, had to him all the force and solemnity of an oath. Matthew swore in open court in the spirit of his master; but vain was the testimony; the spendthrift gained the cause; and the

sudden shock finished the usurer. He died, leaving everything he had for the erection of a chapel, bequeathing not even a blessing to his clerk. Hapless Matthew! It was not enough for the defendant to gain a victory, but he must persecute the conquered. An indictment was filed against the clerk for perjury. He was tried, found guilty, and sentenced; and for only swearing in the spirit of his master, Matthew was condemned to pass two years in Newgate, and to stand one hour by St. Sepulchre's clock in the pillory!

Poor Matthew! They who saw him fixed and turning, avow to his credit, that he went round and round with the calmness and equanimity of the most practised statesman.

All was breathless, hushed, in the Old Bailey, as Matthew was presented to the mob. The executioner acquitted himself with praiseworthy adroitness. In an instant Matthew was ready for the sport; and still the silence reigned, as he stood, prepared for the first turn.

"Ha! ha! ha! Hooked him, by —!" rang from a window of the governor's mansion. Yes, there was the ubiquitous Nabob! He had been brought to Newgate by a sailor, subsequently doomed to the hulks; had been trafficked with a turnkey's wife for tobacco, and, after various prison vicissitudes, was promoted to the drawing-room of the governor.

Nothing could exceed the humanity of the crowd. Two or three moralised on the condition of the culprit;

but, with a single exception, no spectator offered an affront. Having turned his hour, Matthew was about to be released.

"How are you now?" inquired the executioner.

"Pretty well — pretty well — if" —

At this moment, a dastard in the human form flung a handful of mire in the eyes of the sufferer; who, trying to shake it off, merely added —

"If — if — I — could — see — my — way!"

A kind Samaritan attended Matthew in the prison. He sought to clear the eyes of the sufferer of certain particles. "Look straight forward," said the operator.

"Ha!" groaned Matthew, and he thought, "if I had always looked straightforward, how very, very differently should I have seen my way!"

JOHN APPLEJOHN:

THE MAN WHO "MEANT WELL."

JOHN APPLEJOHN:

THE MAN WHO "MEANT WELL."

CHAPTER I.

COURAGE, reader; we have entered Chancery Lane. Behold a gentleman in glossy black, with pale and contemplative face; with half-closed lids, and eyes, hare-like, thrown back: he glances at an opposite arch, the entrance to a solemn Hall, where nothing is heard save notes of sweetest sound — justice tinkling her golden scales! The arch to common eyes is built of coarsest stone. It is a piece of purest ivory, worthy to frame the looking-glass of truth; whose silver-voiced sons pass rustling in and out, arrayed in her sable garb — for truth, a milk-white virgin in the sky, became an Ethiop when she touched the earth; albeit that these her children oft-times deny the change, vowing her blackest black to be the whitest white. And in and out these goodly creatures pass, — wisdom on their brows, hope in their eyes, and peace and love upon their lips. Their awful heads bear curled treasures, snatched from the manes and tails of steeds of Araby, whitened with powdered pearls which

Venus' self might weep for. The phœnix might nestle in one of these — by the profane illiterate denominated wigs — deeming it his chosen spicery!

And see that loitering band of middle-aged and venerable men. What a halo of benevolence surrounds each head and glistens on each face! With a wise contempt of outward show, they are clad in threadbare raiments; yes, though able to appear in purple and fine linen, they meekly choose to stand in faded black and amber-coloured cotton. And yet these practical philanthropists will, in the kindest spirit of intelligence, speak of their abounding wealth: nay, to serve their follow-creatures, they have been known to swear to it. They have made oath to their possessions — wealth in bonds, and granaries heaped with yellow corn; and this, when the reckless vulgar have called them — men of straw!

A little onward, and we halt at the simple dwelling of the sober scrivener. Old Egypt, with her paragraphs of pictures, comes upon us, as we contemplate the labouring scribes. How wise the craft, how profound the mystery! Look at the ample skin; with what occult wisdom is it overwrought! How thickly is the true meaning shrouded from the common brain, perplexed and reeling at the cunning of the art! Grope manfully through the labyrinth of words, and though you are but a vulgar man, you will apprehend the sense as easily as would the eyeless Samson. Is not the device most exquisite? Is not this cobweb writing most admirable? But ere you hope to seize its pur-

port in its pure simplicity, first learn to tell us what language speaks the painted dog of Cheops? — what his cat? — what the ibis? — and what the mystic crocodile? Even the stamped lion and unicorn at the margin of the deed, with their open, ingenuous faces, seem to wonder at the mystery they are called upon to make valid and to dignify.

Not so fast: tarry and consider these goodly rows of tomes, in coats of leather made sacred to the law. Do you not feel a sudden bowing of the spirit — an awe, as if the sages of long-departed time rose silently as vapours from their tombs, and stared upon you? Ponder on the mighty brains conserved in the leaves before you. Marvel at the untiring spirit that hath painted right and wrong, and both in colours softening delicately down, that where the separate hues begin or end, it asks some fifty spirits more to tell. Musing on the books, our fancy changes them to different things: now, they are pieces of pure crystal — now, wedges of thrice-assayed gold — now, pots of honey for the hungering — medicine for the sick. Here, the stricken stranger, bleeding with his wrongs, may pause and read his glorious remedy. Here, the wan widow gathers hope for her just cause — and here, the orphan dries her sorrow, comforted by strong assertion. And here, the man, hurt by some neighbour's tongue, may learn if he be surely hurt or not. Survey the shelves: they bend with the weight of grave opinions; and learn this further good, that to a single point there run a hundred opposite lines. Look again: the place is thronged

with forms. We are led back to the days of the first Henry — of that foolish bully, John — of pious Edward. And there are the forest laws; and with a thought, we have the villain driving his swine to the beech trees, the immortal man but little raised above his grunting charge: we see the sport of nobles, and the pain of serfs, and we sigh for the days of the picturesque when the life of a man was of no more account than the life of a deer. Talk of vendors of romance! Give us the window of a law-bookseller for the bloody tales of iron life. See, there — "State Trials" in a massive row: the books are gone — but there is an array of faces! Time, the great cleanser, has been there at work. There, the miserable man of lies, his ears clipped to the skull, is a preacher of truth; and there, the leprous traitor loses his scales, and smiles on passing generations a bright-faced martyr!

Turn we from the houses, to the passengers and loiterers at doors. Look at that slim, short, young man, at the end of an alley; his eyes rolling and twinkling in their sockets, as though he feared a tiger was at hand, but where he knew not. He stands but a few paces from his own sweet home, like a spider advanced upon its web. His face shows him to be a descendant of the patriarchs; it has an anxious though not a melancholy beauty: he has a mildly drooping lip and the eye of a moulting hawk. No man has watched some of his fellow-creatures with greater

l; and if the labour has deepened his spirit, it has

also sharpened it. There, again, is a man of a quite different mark: his acute study of the law, his intimate knowledge of its green winding alleys and its mossy nooks, has repaid him with advantages he cares not to conceal: witness the sapphire, larger than a beetle, brightening in his breast; his fingers ringed to the joint with flashing gems; his chain of gold swinging in massive loop at his velvet vest.

And there are two or three of the humbler priesthood — the working clergy in the cause of right; the toiling souls who bear the insignia and the types of law; who do "personal service" to a thousand men, and think but little of the act. And there is the portly broker — the smooth-faced sworn functionary; he with universal judgment, who — on the sanctity of his oath — philosophically and arithmetically proves the worth of all things.

Shall we proceed? It is a hot June evening, and the pent air burns and stifles like the heat of an oven.

Stay; who have we seated on this step, — his elbow on his knee, his face in his hand? Who is he, that on a sultry night in June sits on the step of a house — one of the dozen places of ease to the larger gaols? Who is he — who can he be?

Reader, — he is John Applejohn; a simple soul of good dispositions, — a man who "means well."

CHAPTER II.

"I AM very sorry, Mr. Applejohn — very sorry, indeed; but you must know I am a father and" —

"To be sure," said John, "or how could I marry Sarah?" And our hero looked innocently into the face of a tall, big man, rustic in his dress and manner, who now tapped his leather gaiter with a stick, and now scrambled his fingers through his thin grey hair, and now coughed, and tried to put a resolute look into his broad, healthy, unthinking countenance, which in its general expression might have typified the strength and hearty virtues of that worthiest of knights, good Sir John Barleycorn.

"I am very sorry for you indeed, John — Mr. Applejohn," — and the sorrowful speaker passed the wide cuff of his drab coat round his hat and fell into deeper melancholy.

"Why, master Twopenny" — and John stared, and his mouth widened and grew rigid, and his blood sank from his face as he spoke — "no, no — there's no harm come to Sarah? No! — Sarah's well?"

"As well as you'll let her be," said Twopenny.

"As well as I'll let her be — I?" cried John in amazement — "but come in — come in, master Twopenny," and John fluttered into a small room, and Twopenny, sighing, and slowly rubbing his cheek, heavily followed.

"And now, about Sarah?" cried John as he dropt into a chair.

All's well," said old Twopenny, leaning on his stick, and lowering himself into his seat.

"Mr. John Applejohn," said the abrupt Twopenny, "what do you think of brandy?"

"To be sure, directly," said the alert John, about to quit the parlour, when his arm was vigorously grasped by the farmer, who shook his head, and cried louder and louder — "Not a drop — not a drop — not a drop," accompanying the last three words with an action of the wrist that brought John once more into his chair.

"Why, what is the matter?" cried the bewildered John.

Twopenny, drawing a long sigh, said — "I'm very sorry, Mr. Applejohn, — very sorry; but you must know that I am a father, and" —

"To be sure you are; well?" —

"And the happiness of Sarah isn't to be thrown away. You'll allow that?"

"Certainly: thrown away!" cried Applejohn shuddering at the very thought.

"I always thought well of you, Mr. Applejohn" — John bowed thankfully — "I thought you a moral young man, and more than that, a good workman; if you did but know your own worth, Mr. Applejohn! No man's name stands higher for buckskins — there doesn't," and the old farmer solemnised his assertion by savagely slapping his own leg — "no, there does'nt! And yet, what are good gifts, if folks will cast 'em away?"

Now it seemed to John that the old man had drunk himself through all the grades of intoxication, arriving at that dreary point where maudlin ensues.

"No, Mr. Applejohn, I couldn't ha' thought it; I 'd never ha' believed you was born to drink."

"What shall I do with him?" thought John.

"It 's worse than the black art when it fastens on a man."

"True, master Twopenny — very true," cried John humouring the old man whom he thought fast sinking into insensibility, though in truth he was every moment becoming more soberly pathetic. "True, master Twopenny, — and yet a little — little drink," —

"A little drink! Tell me this, John Applejohn — tell me this," and Twopenny brought his chair back, and with his broad fingers patting John's wrist, looked into the young man's simple face, and asked in a voice of subdued earnestness, "John Applejohn, did you ever see a pumpkin in a bottle?"

John paused ere he replied. Yes! — he believed he had seen some such phenomenon.

"And do you know how it got there?" John shook his head. "You don't know how it got there?" cried Twopenny — "I 'll tell ye;" and Twopenny leaned over to the ear of John, and took it upon his own sagacity to say — "they put the pumpkin in when it was little." Saying which, the farmer drew back, anxiously awaiting the effect of the intelligence upon John; who, we presume, was not altogether astonished by the published secret, for he stroked his chin, and

calmly remarked — "Indeed?" On this, Mr. Twopenny slowly rose to his full height.

"Well, Mr. Applejohn, then I've nothing more to say — you know my mind?"

"He is very drunk," thought John.

"Now, we understand one another," said Twopenny.

"Not quite," said John meekly.

"No! why, this it is then; a man" — and the farmer spoke with great solemnity — "a man is a pumpkin."

"Excessively drunk," thought John.

"He begins to drink little by little — but the thing grows and grows, until at last, he cannot free himself — he can't get out, — he can't get out, John," cried the farmer in a tone of reproach.

"Very true," said Applejohn, dimly apprehending the moral application.

"And so I am come to the religious determination that you shall never marry my Sally," said the stern Twopenny.

John had scarcely breath sufficient to ask, "why not?"

"Because," cried the farmer with a searching glance — "because, you are found out."

"Found out?" gasped Applejohn.

"Found out!" repeated Twopenny. "You sha'n't have Sally; for I'm determined, when she takes a husband, she sha'n't marry a pumpkin in a bottle." The farmer said no more; three strides took him into the

street. John, as if stunned by a blow followed to the door, and staring after his visitor, remarked to himself — "How very well he walks — and yet, how very drunk!" Now, farmer Twopenny was sober as a Hindoo.

CHAPTER III.

THREE days had passed, and every morning John Applejohn had leaned, with a beating heart, at his door-post. The fourth morning, and the letter came. And John reads, and as he reads, we are sure the fiends rejoice. —

"MY DEAR JOHN, — Did I ever think I should live to see this day! It is better that I should have died — much better that I had never been born! My father makes me write this, and though I mean every word I write, my heart bleeds at every syllable. It is in vain they tell me that I ought to thank heaven for my escape; I have tried to do so; but I can't — and yet I feel it very wicked not to be grateful. Oh, John! could I have thought it of you! though I tremble to think of your deceit. You, who always seemed so sober — and now to be found out! But I won't upbraid you, John, although my heart is breaking. I have said all I could for you to my father, but he is harder than any flint against you. For your own sake, John, leave off this dreadful habit: think what it must lead to — and shun liquor more than you would shun

a fever; for that only hurts the body — drink kills a good name. When I think of you as I first saw you — and think what this wicked course will make of you — how it will leave you without friends, without health — a jeer for the world, and a burthen to yourself, I could — for all my father says — cry myself blind to save you. Do, John, pray do, step back from the pit that is open at your foot; and do not forget that although you and I — my father makes me write it, has made me promise it — although you and I must never meet again, you will never cease to be remembered by — SARAH."

(A few words added as a postscript had been carefully marked out.)

John looked up from the letter with gaping mouth and an unconscious stare: it *was* paper, real paper that he held — and, yes, the hand was the hand of Sarah!

"Good morning, Mr. Applejohn." The greeting was repeated, ere John was conscious of the presence of a visitor, who, having thrice knocked without an invitation to enter, had opened the door. "Good morning, — eh? — not very well,"—observed the considerate stranger.

"A — a sick headache," said John.

"Have you tried nothing?" asked Warp. John was silent. "Then take my advice. I was young myself once, Mr. Applejohn, and know what a little attack of the sort is — take my advice; try my remedy: you have nothing to do but to take a hair of the dog that bit you."

"A dog! bit me! why, — what dog?" asked John, staring at his adviser.

"Why, — he! he! — hav'n't you heard the saying?" — (the hypocrite! he must have heard it, judged Warp) — "he! he! a hair of the dog that bit you. That is, if a great deal of brandy did the mischief last night, a little drop of the same may bring about a cure this morning. I advise you as I would advise my own child, if I had one."

"No doubt, Mr. Warp — but — you see, you have mistaken my illness — I never drink, never — and now, in a short word, Mr. Warp, what is your business?"

"My business is from the firm. I am desired to say that, in consequence of matters to which it would, perhaps, be indelicate in me to more particularly allude, our house cannot suffer you to open an account."

"Very well, Mr. Warp; I suppose there are other houses," said John, with great resignation.

"True, Mr. Applejohn; very true; but character flies, Sir; yes, Sir, character has wings; and, of course, the lighter it is, the quicker it goes."

"Character! why, does anybody dare?" — asked John, his eyes flashing — "does anybody dare?" —

Warp shook his head, and smiled cynically: "You mus'n't talk in that manner: you 're a young tradesman with no capital, and everybody dares. It may be all very well for men established; but it doesn't answer for young beginners: at all events, if they must do

these things, they should have a proper respect for their own interests, and do them snugly, and in private."

"What things? — what do you mean?" exclaimed John.

"I am not one of those men who have no kindness for my fellow-creatures; no, no, I have seen too much of life. And perhaps it isn't right to get drunk; perhaps not; but it is very wrong indeed in a young man with his way to make, to let the world know it."

"Drunk! you can't mean me, Mr. Warp? Nobody ever saw" —

"We do such things in that state, we don't know who sees."

"But what is all this to me?" cried John.

"What to you? Oh, Mr. Applejohn!" — said Warp, with something like pathos, — "for a young beginner to be known to drink is utter ruin not only with his clothier but his customer. I don't blame you for getting drunk, Applejohn — upon my soul I don't," — and Warp spoke with impressive benevolence, — "but I must and do condemn you for sitting down and exposing your drunkenness in the open street. You don't know who saw you — indeed you don't," and Warp quitted the house. He walked at a quick pace down the street; and suddenly pausing at a corner, looked vigilantly about him. He then rapidly passed a threshold, above which an enormous bunch of grapes glittering in the sun, typified the *aurum potabile* to be had within.

"You don't know who saw you!" These words rang in the ears of Applejohn. It was plain some mortal enemy had been at work! John Applejohn a drunkard, when the naiad of the stream was no more temperate than he! Oh, it was some foolish trick passed upon him — and yet, Sarah to join in it! No: it was clear enough; some wicked, spiteful wretch — perhaps, a rival — had vowed his ruin; and this was the cruel slander raised to crush him. However, he would not be destroyed without an attempt to clear the matter up; he would trace the villany to its spring-head, and punish the cowardly delinquents. He had already grown strong in the resolution, and was about to quit the house on the sacred errand, when he was encountered at the door by his landlord.

"Could I say a few words with you, Mr. Applejohn?" asked the man.

"Just a few; for I'm in a great hurry," answered John.

"I won't keep you a minute," said the landlord, and immediately proceeded to open the business. "I've been thinking, Mr. Applejohn," he observed very considerately, "that, perhaps, as you are only just setting up, you'll find this house too heavy for you."

"I hope not," said John.

"I am sure, I should be very sorry to be in any way the innocent cause of hampering a young man beginning the world," —

"You are very good, Mr. Pantile — very good," remarked his grateful tenant.

"And though, for the house itself, the rent is very little; still, as I told you, in this parish the rates are very heavy."

"Light — very light — next to nothing, you said, Mr. Pantile."

"Never could have said that — never could. However, that doesn't signify. What I am come to say is this: if you have any misgivings about your prospects — and as I wouldn't stand in a young man's light — I — yes, I 'll tell you what I 've made up my mind to do: I 'll take the lease off your hands, and all I 'll ask of you is the rent for the present quarter." And as Mr. Pantile said this, he looked at John as placidly as a fox looks at a goose. "Don't think, Mr. Applejohn, that I am led away by what folks say of you — no, no; when I was as young as you I had my fling: I led a life of pleasure — I may say, I was quite a rhapsodist" — (it was not very clear to Mr. Pantile, what he meant by the word,) — "quite a rhapsodist; and therefore, if you think the house too big for you — and though I speak against my own interest, I think it is — I — at a word, I 'll take it back again."

"You are very good, Mr. Pantile — very good — but I shall keep the house, — and as for what my enemies say against me — and, if I must say it, a man who can fine-draw as I can, can't expect to be without enemies," —

"You know best," said the landlord, "but as I have received a letter from Mr. Twopenny, telling me that

you shall not have his daughter, and therefore not the three hundred pounds," —

"And has Mr. Twopenny written as much to you?" asked John tremblingly.

"And who can blame him? I used to get tipsy once, for as I said, I was once a rhapsodist — but you know, Mr. Applejohn, excuse ourselves as we may, if we will only think as a father, we can't blame any man for keeping his daughter safe from a drunkard." And Mr. Pantile departed.

Here was another blow, and again John sat irresolute and astounded. Like Ugolino, he sat staring at the wall; when the pastry-cook's boy entered with a parcel. "Shall I put it on the table, Sir?" John started, and stammered "yes;" and the little boy deposited his burthen close to the arm of the absorbed Applejohn, and went away. John, heaving his deepest sigh, let fall his hand upon the parcel: that parcel was his wedding-cake — his superfluous wedding-cake.

CHAPTER IV.

We will spare the reader a recital of the many attempts made by John upon the obduracy of the farmer. John had thought himself within a few fleet days of marriage. His house was in order — his credit good — his name unspotted; and lo! at a breath he had lost his bride — his credit — and his name. It was in vain that John asked to be confronted with his

accusers, — the assassins of his reputation. No, no; farmer Twopenny was satisfied, and further appeal was unnecessary. Nor was John more successful in his address to the employers of Mr. Warp; they had nothing to say to Mr. Applejohn; or merely this — they begged to decline his orders except for ready money. For three whole nights did John lie wide awake, reviewing every deed of his past life. He could only arrive at one conclusion — a dreary one it was, — that some profligate wretch, like to himself as pin is like to pin, was reeling drunkenly about the town, and he, the innocent John Applejohn, was doomed to bear the punishment due to the bacchanal! And with this comfortable thought John would fall asleep. Alas! his waking misery still haunted him. Now, he would be hunted for picking pockets, the real thief — his fatal similitude — safely off with the booty: now, he was to be hung for sheep-stealing, and there in the crowd, was the guilty rascal grinning and making faces at him. At last, all his troubles were over, and he was married to his beloved Sarah: he goes to his happy home at eleven at night, and knocking at his door, is told from the window to call to-morrow, as Mr. John Applejohn has been in bed these two hours! Such were the visions that wore our hero by night, and gave him the look of a spectre all the day. However, as yet John had only taken the first step in infamy. Though almost a confirmed water-drinker, he was nevertheless judged an irreclaimable drunkard. He surrendered his house to Mr. Pantile, who, rhapso-

dist as he deemed himself, cancelled the lease; the no less willingly that he had previously had a higher bidder for the article.

Thus fortune turned away from John, and he stood alone, with nothing but his poverty, and a thousand imperfections. And yet John, though bleeding inwardly with undeserved injuries, looked upon men and loved them: yes, there was no man, woman, or child, to whom he did not mean well. A rigid anatomist might question the fact, but we are convinced that John's heart was his whole body.

"The Bottle of Hay" was, at the time of our story, a noted sanctuary for unemployed tailors. There, about three months after his rejection by Sarah, was to be found the pennyless Applejohn. The nights were growing long and chill, and the parlour fire of Mrs. Shorts, the lone and portly landlady, meekly imitated the beneficence of the impartial sun, for it dispensed its light and warmth gratis to the destitute tailor. And there the keen-eyed might behold through clouds of circumambient smoke, the pensive John fixed in a corner, his blood now simmering with martial heat, listening to a martial song, in which the singer with a note of gratifying confidence, assured the listener that any number of French was considerably less than one true Briton, — and that to expire covered over with wounds was the only really desirable way of going out of this sublunar world. Then would John think of a distant country, and of that soft delicious bed, with death the maker — the

bed of glory. A brief five minutes, and the stern desire for cutting throats would pass; a second singer, with a voice like that of a cuckoo, breathing "Cherry Ripe," and, with the magic sound, carrying back our tailor through the orchards of Kent to the house of Sarah.

"Mr. Scarlet, what may be your real opinion of the present state of the land force?" Such was the comprehensive question put by an inquiring visitor at the "Bottle of Hay," to a sometime tenant of that commodious hostelry.

"Shameful," replied Mr. Scarlet, with the manner of a man who has long since made up his mind upon a subject. "But what are we to expect from the present ministry? What do they care for the honour of the country? Ha! if we had real statesmen in office, there 'd been war these six months. Yes; by this time we might have lost a thousand troops. Shameful," repeated Mr. Scarlet.

"A shocking sacrifice of blood," remarked a philanthropist.

"Blood, Sir? What is blood? Think of glory, Sir," said Mr. Scarlet. "But we stand disgraced in the eyes of the world, when a few battles, if we had got nothing by them, would at least have kept up our character. And then for our fine young gentlemen, — why isn't it dreadful for a man as loves his country, to see 'em — poor fellows! — put to the shifts they are, to get rid of time, when the trouble might be taken off their hands in a minute? And yet people

talk of the blessings of peace! Why, peace isn't the natural state of man."

"Mr. Scarlet" — it was the waiter, with his head in at the door, who spoke — "Mr. Scarlet, your wife has sent your little girl over to say, that if you don't come home, she 'll come and fetch you."

"Peace isn't the natural state of man," repeated Scarlet, who we think had not heard the threat of his wife, pronounced through the waiter. — "No; it isn't," and hastily finishing his liquor, he quitted the parlour.

"He knows the true interests of the country," said a sartorial smoker: "yes, he knows the value of war."

"To be sure he does," remarked another — "he's an army tailor."

And with such sweet discourse, the hours were passed in the parlour of "the Bottle of Hay," until time and Bill, the boy, called the tailors to bed. In a long narrow room, at the top of the house, Mrs. Shorts had benevolently caused to be disposed twenty couches — each couch, if the parties made themselves small, and were mutually accommodating, — capable of holding, if not containing, two sleepers. When trade was very bad, there might be seen sleeping in the house of Mrs. Shorts, forty horizontal tailors — yes, in "the Bottle of Hay," full two score unemployed needles.

John had retired to bed; tailor by tailor came in, and each and all having less sorrow, or more liquor

than John, soon gave loudest evidence of perfect rest. Triton with his horn had not been heard among that sleeping band. The clock of the neighbouring church struck one: at the very moment, the door opened, and John saw Mrs. Shorts in a voluminous nightcap, and a lighted candle in her hand, walk as softly as her weight would permit her, into the dormitory. She was followed by a man almost as big as herself. "Another of the unemployed," thought John, as he now eyed what he believed to be a journeyman tailor, pretty far gone in his thread of life. The man wore a close drab-coat, buttoned to the chin: an oil-skin travelling-cap and a red handkerchief pulled over his head, and tied up to his nose, tantalised the curious spectator with a very imperfect view of the face of the stranger. Mrs. Shorts and the new-comer moved slowly up the room; the landlady so shadowing the light with her right hand that its rays might come tempered to the countenances of the sleepers, showing them all unconscious to the inquisitive new comer. "A constable, no doubt," thought John — "some robbery," — and then the causes of his late ill-luck fell forcibly upon him, and in his terrified imagination, he pictured the officers of the peace in search of him, the guilty likeness of the real thief. John closed his eye-lids, and heard the visitors approach his pallet. Suddenly, they stopt; and John, in sudden perspiration, awaited the arousing hand of the stranger. There was a pause, and John lay voiceless with apprehension.

"You 'll cut me off dis fellow," growled the man in the oil-skin cap.

John opened his eyes and saw the back of the mysterious speaker, slowly moving towards the door, the landlady with the light preceding. "You 'll cut me off this fellow," continued to ring through the brain of John. Twice in his sleep — for sleep came to him at length — did John suffer decapitation: once by the Christian axe, and once by the heathen scimitar.

CHAPTER V.

"MR. APPLEJOHN, if you 'll go to Mr. Zweifler's, there 's work for you." Such was the grateful intelligence conveyed, at breakfast time, to John by Bill, the boy; and in less than twenty minutes, our unemployed hero stood in the presence of Karl Zweifler, a German by birth, a tailor by trade, and a benevolent brute by disposition. Whether the scepticism had been brought upon him by a succession of bad debts, or whether Mr. Zweifler was a born doubter, we attempt not to decide; certain it is, that though compelled by the hard destiny of business, to give credit, he had really no faith in any man. He looked upon all the world as a brotherhood of villains sworn and linked together to cheat one tailor, and that defenceless animal to be — Karl Zweifler.

"I am come, Sir, hearing that you wanted a workman," said John, and he had scarcely spoken ere he felt himself grow cold beneath the light blue eyes of

the old man; the nocturnal visitor of the bed-room. "I am come, Sir," John repeated, and then stopped.

"Teeves — teeves — all teeves" — said Zweifler. "Ha! — well — dere's de oder villains," — and pointing to a staircase, John followed the direction of the finger, and found himself among a circle of his peers. John was ignorant of the grateful truth, but he really owed his present place to the ingenuousness of his countenance. It was the custom of Mr. Zweifler, when in want of mercenaries, to visit "The Bottle of Hay" in the middle of the night; and at that solemn time to select from the sleepers — the selection always suggested by the expression on the face of the sleeping — the required member or members. Hence, when Zweifler, pausing at the bed of John Applejohn, said, in professional phrase, to Mrs. Shorts, — "You 'll cut me off this fellow," he merely implied, "you 'll send this man to me to-morrow morning." We beseech the reader not to dismiss this whim as a puerile invention on our part; by so doing, he would commit great injustice towards Karl Zweifler, who always defended what seemed to more superficial tailors an eccentricity, on the ground that "no rogue ever looked so much a rogue as when he was asleep."

John Applejohn continued to sew and reap in the house of the master tailor; and already six months had elapsed, when John stood, in the opinion of his employer, not altogether so atrocious a villain as when he first entered his service. It was a long time, however, ere Zweifler ceased to attribute the rigid industry

of John on Mondays to some deep-laid scheme of deception; some unheard-of plan of infamy. The attention and sobriety of his journeyman somewhat irritated the old tradesman, as they seemed to insult his theory of the iniquity of all mankind and of tailors in particular. "The devil is not so black as he's painted," observed the homely John Applejohn in reply to the uncharitable creed of Zweifler, one Monday more than usually satirical on his laborious servant; and the manner of John more than the matter of the proverb struck the misanthrope; for, with new-born benevolence, he rubbed the tips of his fingers under his black velvet skull-cap, and twinkling his light blue eyes, he said with a faint smile — "Not so black? Well — well — berhaps not: berhaps, after all, de deyvil is a piebalt."

It was Monday, and John sat alone upon the board. He was employed on the last button-hole of a new black coat — the livery of woe for Benjamin Gruelthorpe, Esq.; son and heir of Emanuel Gruelthorpe, deceased. John glanced from his work, and saw old Zweifler looking seriously on. The old tailor knit his brows at the garment — shook his head — and groaned through his teeth.

"Nothing the matter with the coat, Sir?" asked John, deferentially.

"No, no; goot poy — goot poy: de oder teeves are at nine-pins, but you are goot poy," and never before had Zweifler so unequivocally praised the industry of his now solitary workman.

"Why, Sir, the funeral takes place this afternoon," — said John.

"Ha! ha! What music it will pe, when de cold clay goes tumblin' on de old man's coffin!" and Zweifler laughed bitterly.

"Mr. Gruelthorpe has died very rich?" said John, inquiringly. "His son —"

"Son!" cried Zweifler, and he approached still nearer to his journeyman, and with subdued voice and moistened eyes, said — "John Applejohn, do you know what a son is?" and then without waiting for a reply, went on — "I will tell you, John Applejohn — I will tell you, what it is to have a son. It is to hear an angel at your ear at his first leetle cry: it is to feel an angel at your breast de first time to put him dere: it is to have your heart every day grow pig and pig, and your eye to have better light to hear his tongue — to see his leetle steps! It is — it is — but — but you want some silk, John," — and the old man, his eyes gushing tears, turned rapidly up the room, John pausing at his undrawn needle in silent wonder. In a few minutes, the old tailor, with a composed face and dry eyes returned, and threw to John the unnecessary skein of silk. There was a pause of some minutes; at length, John ventured to observe — "I understand, Sir, that Mr. Gruelthorpe's funeral will be very fine?"

"Very — very fine," said Zweifler, "why not — why not?"

"I 'm told the grave is to be twelve feet deep," remarked John.

"Deeper, deeper," replied the old man, earnestly. "All such graves are."

"Such graves?" and John looked up.

"Dere is a story in my country about 'em, John. While you press de coat, I 'll tell it you, John — I 'll tell it you."

"Is it true, Sir?" asked Applejohn.

"As heaven," answered old Zweifler; and John worked and listened to the tale we are about to narrate, omitting the peculiarities of the old German.

"Hans Pfennig," said the old tailor, "lived in the little town of Cuxhaven. He had been a merchant in his younger time, and had returned from a far land to die in his first home. He was so old, no man remembered him a child: he lived, solitary as a raven — and like a raven, was shunned as a thing of evil omen. He was known to have the wealth of a king, and yet he wore the rags and ate the scraps of a beggar. He was a man to make men shudder as they looked upon him — mothers would catch their children up from his path, and flee away with them as from a fasting wolf: and so he lived, with the hate of his neighbours breathing upon him. Days, and weeks, and months passed, and no man had seen Hans Pfennig. The priest and some of the townsfolk bent their way to the lonely hovel of the miser. There they paused, and looked in the face of one another; for the door of the hut was closed, and long grass waved before it. The door, by the order of the priest, was broken in; and Hans Pfennig was found, seated in his chair, dead and withered. The hut

was ransacked, and oh! the gold and jewels raked into the light of day. The shed stood upon a mine of buried wealth. Well, — a distant heir was found; and the bell was tolled, and the grave was dug for Hans Pfennig. The day of burial came; and if the dead might be made to move, the body of Hans Pfennig had sat up in its coffin, tortured back to life by the gold bestowed upon its dust. The bearers brought the body to the grave: the coffin was slung within the ropes, and every eye was bent upon the bier descending to the bottom. The ropes were found too short; and staringly, but silently, the diggers tied more rope to either end; they lowered and lowered, and again the rope was out. 'More rope,' cried the grey-haired sexton, and shook his palsied hands; and the people at the grave stood, as if death-struck, and the priest made the holy sign and the cross was raised. 'The belfry — the belfry!' cried the sexton, and two men ran to the church and brought back a coil of rope, anew provided for the bells. Again they give more rope, and the body of the miser sinks and sinks. 'Pull up the corse,' exclaims the priest; and twenty men tug at the rope, but cannot lift the dead. As they pause, they hear a clawing at the bottom of the coffin, with smothered shrieks of laughter. Aghast, they quit the rope, when the coffin rushes — rushes — down as into the unfathomable abyss! 'Who dug the grave?' — 'I — ten feet deep,' cried the sexton. — 'Not you, sexton — not you,' said an old monk. 'Last night, I walked here, and I saw things not of this world digging on this spot. There was moonlight, and I saw the

glittering of their golden spades!' 'Golden spades!' cried the young heir. — 'Aye, son; they made the miser's last bed; for he who hoards the treasures of this world, and looks unmoved on this world's misery, has just this reward — his grave is dug by devils with a golden spade!'"

"Mr. Gruelthorpe's mourning, Sir? A boy has just come about it — and he desires that one of the men may take it home."

"Shall I step with it?" asked John, who had almost breathlessly folded up the coat as Zweifler finished his legend. Zweifler nodded assent, and John hurried away with the suit of solemn black to the disconsolate heir of the muckthrift.

Benjamin Gruelthorpe had been rescued from the ignominy of earning his own bread by the lamented death of his venerable parent, who at the age of threescore and five had dropped like a medlar from the tree of life. Benjamin was determined to act justly by the world; he resolved on speedily rendering back to men the heap of wealth his sire had slowly gathered from them. Old Gruelthorpe had a thousand times crucified his soul for a guinea; his only child the airy Benjamin, flung away his inheritance as if his one earthly task was to arrive as soon as possible at his last shilling. With kindly impulses, he had never been taught to look upon his father but as an obstacle to his pleasures; and, capable of affection, he heard the death of the old man with that beating of the heart which tells the prisoner he is free. Benjamin lost not an hour in assert-

ing his new importance; and ere the dead miser was laid in his grave, his spendthrift son had quitted the counter of a pawnbroker for lodgings at a London hotel; where, swathed in a silken morning gown and stretched on a couch — a bank of crimson velvet — he awaited with resignation in his soul and a newspaper in his hand, the coming of the tailor.

Applejohn arrived at the hotel, was instantly shown up to the chief mourner; who, turning his head, and running his fingers through the thousand flaxen rings with which that head had been adorned, deliberately opened his mouth, and hazarded a conjecture. "I 'spose the tailor?" John bowed, and took the suit of sables from the bag.

"What 's o'clock?" asked Benjamin languidly of a tall, grave-looking person, in whose face there were all the deliberative cares of a landlord.

"I should say, Sir," replied Mr. Oldjoe, a man who evidently never committed himself — "I should say, Sir," and he looked at the chronometer, "seven minutes and a half to ten."

"And Scutcheon, the undertaker, is punctual?"

"As death, Sir," said Mr. Oldjoe, swallowing a laugh at his own wit, and then looking more than commonly grave at the great sacrifice.

"How is it, Oldjoe?" and young Gruelthorpe, having donned the black coat, turned his back upon his host — "How is it: a fit?"

"If I hadn't seen you put it on," said the landlord

rolling one eye at the tailor, — "I could have sworn you had been born in it."

"Well, that will do. Oldjoe, let the fellow have something," said young Gruelthorpe, exposing his want of gentility by the order.

"What would you like to take?" asked Oldjoe of our tailor, as both descended the stairs.

"I never drink — never," said John with emphasis.

"To be sure not," said the landlord, with a happy look. "No — no man who drinks, could make a coat like that. I 'm so glad you won't have my champagne — won't touch my burgundy — can't abide my claret — and would feel poisoned at my straw-coloured brandy. I'm glad of it: but you don't know why? I 'll tell you; because it affords me the opportunity of recommending my soda-water."

"Is it so wonderful?" asked Applejohn.

"It's as good as brandy, without any of its bad character for drunkenness," asseverated the imperturbable Oldjoe. "Wonderful! bless you, it's so strong, your goose could swim in it. Here, Godfrey, a bottle of soda-water for this gentleman; — the best."

"Have you two sorts of bottles?" questioned John.

"To be sure; five shilling and three-and-six-penny; one for gentlemen, t' other for the poor." At this moment, Mr. Scutcheon entering the hotel, withdrew the attention of the landlord from our temperate tailor; and Oldjoe quitted John to show the page of death to young master Gruelthorpe.

"Oh! the — the undertaker," said Benjamin, still upon the sofa; his hand still among his curls.

Scutcheon bowed, and his long silk hat-band rustled an avowal of his trade.

"Have you removed the — the" — the afflicted son, with the tip of his third finger, tried to displace a possible tear from the corner of his right eye — "the — the body?" and Benjamin, smoothing the collar of his shirt, sighed tolerably deeply.

"To my own house, Sir," said Mr. Scutcheon, looking big with the feelings of hospitality. "Last night, Sir — in the hearse, Sir — from the residence of the deceased." The residence! Emanuel Gruelthorpe had died in an obscure and filthy shed — a hovel hardly fit to shelter cattle. The residence! The residence of a rat.

"I hope everything has been attended to with regard to my feelings?" said Benjamin.

"Oh, Sir! you may rely upon the character of our firm for that," answered the undertaker.

"Oldjoe;" — the landlord crossed to the sofa of young Gruelthorpe, who spoke in a low and confidential voice to his host, Mr. Scutcheon being too much rapt by the character of his firm to overhear their conversation. "Oldjoe," said Benjamin in little above a whisper — "we shall dine at seven, mind; a good show." —

"A Spanish mahogany coffin," said Scutcheon, doggedly enumerating the triumphs of the firm on the body of the deceased. —

"Your best plate," whispered Benjamin. —

"Silver plate and silver handles," said Scutcheon. —

"There 'll be eight of us to feed," continued Benjamin. —

"Fourteen mourners," said the undertaker, "to make 'em spread, in seven coaches." —

"I hope the haunch will stand us all," observed the son. —

"And six to bear," remarked Scutcheon. —

"Oh! and don't forget the singers, for after dinner," warned young Gruelthorpe. —

"I have engaged two," said Oldjoe. — "Wonderful men! been offered any terms by a Russian duke who lived here — but patriots, Sir; wouldn't leave their country." —

"After dinner, we must have — humph! — what d'ye call it?" whispered Benjamin. —

"*Non nobis*," replied Oldjoe, in an equally reduced voice. —

"Then we shall be met by the charity children," continued the undertaker. —

"I suppose they can sing anything?" asked Gruelthorpe of the landlord. —

"Sing! You 'll have '*When Bibo thought fit*' and '*Pretty painted fly*' to admiration," said Oldjoe. —

"The whole to be wound up with a hymn at the vault on the virtues of the deceased," said Scutcheon. —

"I say, Oldjoe; the champagne — the claret, eh? prime," said the chief mourner, still whispering. —

"And for the vault," said the undertaker in a loud

voice, arriving at the climax of his good things — "And for the vault," —

"Trust my cellar," cried Oldjoe to the heir in a raised note. —

"It's so dry," exclaimed Scutcheon; "instead of putting your father in it, you might keep wine there." —

"Wine!" cried the roused Benjamin; "oh!" and, slightly colouring, he rose from the sofa, put his hands into mourning, took his hat from his estimable landlord, and tripped solemnly down stairs to the funeral coach.

We should be unjust to Benjamin did we pass in silence the magnificent evidence of his filial love as displayed through the kind cares of the undertaker. The very grave-diggers paused in admiration of the coffin!

"Anything in the papers?" asked young Gruelthorpe the next day of Oldjoe.

"The arrivals at 'the Hotel' in the *Post*," said the landlord.

"I mean, about the — the funeral," said Benjamin, putting his hand to his head all unused to the fumes of burgundy.

"Not a word, Sir;" — said Oldjoe.

"No! well, well, it's best — I'm glad of it; such matters should be kept quiet. Some soda." The draught, that at five shillings, no doubt, was brought and swallowed; and Benjamin stretched himself upon the couch in deep study.

"It's very odd, Sir, that we have heard no news of the balloon," said Oldjoe, with his immovable dead-man face — "though, I suppose we shall, Sir, as soon as intelligence arrives."

"And not a word?" said Benjamin, in a state of abstraction.

"Not a word, Sir. By-the-bye, Sir, that's a shocking accident that 'death by charcoal.' Captain Nitre, Sir; house newly painted — dried by charcoal fires — went in too soon — died. Heard there were charcoal fires in the house of the dowager Lady Littlebit — she, who has the next suite of rooms; fold down the paper, as in duty bound, at the very paragraph. An excellent lady — a woman who doesn't fly in the face of Providence. Directly she smells the charcoal, she rings the bell — 'Mr. Oldjoe,' says her ladyship, 'I shall stay with you another week.' Poor Captain Nitre." —

"D— that fellow!" cried Gruelthorpe suddenly.

"What! the captain?" said Oldjoe calmly.

"No — no — no. Captain! I mean the fellow who dined with me — he promised to put a full account of it in all the newspapers!"

Yes; whilst the mercenary Oldjoe discoursed of things pertaining to his proper interest, the young heir was meditating on the funeral of his departed father.

END OF VOL. I.

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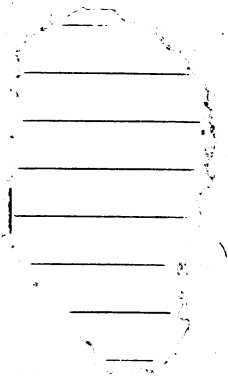
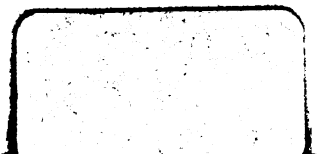
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